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Champion
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Nephew of WW2 submariner to meet relatives of sunken boat's crew

Mums give hospital maternity unit the thumbs up

ENERGY FIRM MOVES ON FRACKING PLANS

Report by **Kenny Parker**

AN energy company has begun the process of applying for permission to 'frack' for gas in West Lancashire.

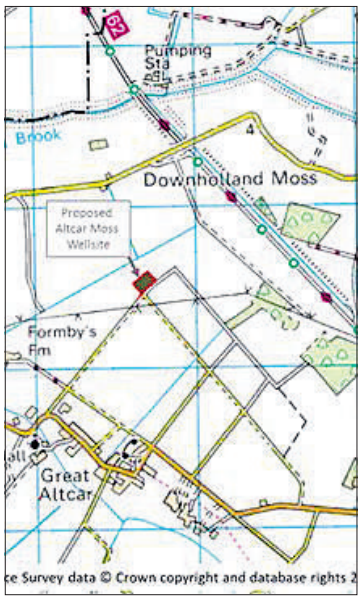
Following analysis of a 3D geophysical survey Aberdeen-based company, Aurora Energy Resources has submitted a scoping request to Lancashire County Council with a view to mining for gas in the Altcar Moss, north of Great Altcar.

Residents in the surrounding areas, some just 850 metres from the proposed site, have received a letter from the company informing them that scoping is the first step in agreeing the extent and nature of environmental assessments required to inform any subsequent planning application.

The company states that it proposes "to drill and hydraulically fracture both a vertical and a separate horizontal well at Altcar Moss to evaluate the potential to produce hydrocarbons from deeply-buried, carboniferous-age rocks."

Managing director, Ian Roche, said: "The discovery of shale gas has opened a new chapter in the hydrocarbon story of North West England that stretches back to the discovery of the Formby oil field almost 80 years ago.

"The UK will require gas for decades to come and the potential to develop a new source of indigenous supply will bring benefits, both nationally and locally, through the provision of tax revenues, skilled jobs and opportunities for local businesses in the supply chain. The UK has a long and exemplary record in the regulation of oil and gas activities, both onshore and offshore, and residents can be reassured that the proposed activities will be conducted safely and with minimal impact on people or the environment."



The map indicating the site of the proposed fracking well at Altcar Moss

Above: Altcar Moss, where Aurora Energy Resources want to 'frack' for shale gas, as it is now

Campaign group disputes claims on benefits and safety

MEMBERS of local environmental group Halsall Against Fracking (HAF) are opposing Aurora's plans and have disputed the claims made by the company, both about benefits to the community and the safety of fracking.

HAF chairwoman and West Lancs Borough councillor for Halsall, Maureen Mills, said: "Claims that 'a new source of indigenous supply' of gas will bring 'benefits' to this beautiful rural agricultural area are spurious when weighed against the environmental impacts.

"If this industry ever went into full production it would bring industrialisation on a scale that would totally desecrate the countryside.

"As for the UK having 'a long and exemplary record in the regulation of oil and gas activities', residents should be aware that only one well has been fracked in England by Cuadrilla at Preese Hall and that induced seismic events which resulted in the industry being effectively closed down in 2011.

"No onshore, high-volume hydraulic fracturing has taken place before or since then.

"There is simply no evidence to support the claim that residents can be reassured that the proposed activities will be conducted safely and with minimal impact on people of the environment."

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Call for visitors with cold and flu symptoms to stay away from hospitals

VISITORS with cold and flu symptoms are being asked to stay away from Southport and Ormskirk hospitals unless absolutely necessary to prevent their spread.

Andrew Chalmers, deputy director of Infection Prevention and Control at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, said: "There are a number of visitors who I've seen visiting their relatives over the weekend who seemed particularly poorly themselves with coughs, colds and even flu-like symptoms.

"So, unless it is absolutely necessary, please stay home and get well before you visit.

"Please bear with us at these challenging times. Our main priority is to contain the flu virus and to protect all our patients and ensure they fully recover as soon as possible so they can return home to their family and friends."

Mr Chalmers advised people with a suspected flu virus, or family members suffering from one, to visit the NHS Choices website for information.

People across Merseyside and West Lancashire are being reminded of the simple message to protect themselves and others from cold and flu this winter - 'Catch it. Bin it. Kill it.'

Catch it: Always carry tissues and use them to cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.

Bin it: Dispose of used tissues as soon as possible.

Kill it: Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitiser following coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.

● **'Think twice before using A&E' plea - Page 11**

Andrew Chalmers, deputy director of Infection Prevention and Control

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Nephew of WW2 submariner to meet other relatives of sunken boat's crew

George Clandon with a picture of his uncle George Lawson who died on HMS Narwhal in 1940, the wreckage of which has only recently been found.

Report by **Tom Martin**

THE nephew of a Second World War submariner whose final resting place in a sunken submarine was only recently discovered at the bottom of the North Sea, will meet with relatives of his uncle's fellow submariners and may also visit the site to pay his respects.

As revealed in the Champion last November, HMS Narwhal, the submarine which Burscough man George Lawson had heroically served on, was discovered off the coast of Norway by a Polish diving expedition searching for the wreck of one of their own country's war era vessels.

The Narwhal, which carried 60 men, had left Blyth in July 1940 to lay mines off the Norwegian coast but was never seen again.

It was learnt afterwards from German war records that a submarine believed to be the Narhwal was sunk after being bombed by the Luftwaffe but its precise location remained a mystery.

Remarkably, George Lawson's nephew, George Clandon, 71, also from Burscough, only learnt of the discovery when a comment he made about his uncle on an online newspaper article about nautical war graves caught the eye of Tomasz Stachura, a member of the Polish crew that found the HMS Narwhal.

George says: "The Polish dive team emailed me to say they were absolutely delighted to find me. I wrote back to thank them for finding the Narwhal."

George Lawson, whose name is the first entry on the Lathom and Burscough War Memorial for the 1939-45 conflict, was an engineer on the ill-fated boat.

He joined the Royal Navy in 1936 at the age of 21 and later volunteered for the submarine service.

He joined the crew of HMS Narwhal following the outbreak of hostilities in September 1939.

The expedition team that found the Narwhal have arranged for 17 families of relatives from the stricken boat to meet in London on Friday January 12. Among the relatives is Tamara Lo, the daughter of the Narwhal's Captain, Lieutenant Commander Robert Burch.

As well as meeting the dive team and learning more about the discovery George says that the team will also discuss sailing the family members out to Norway in May. Proposals are to send six Polish divers and two British divers to investigate the wreck of the Narhwal while famililes leave a wreath on the surface. There are also hopes the divers may be able to attach a memorial plaque to the vessel in memory of those whose who died.

About the meeting in London George Clandon says he expects it be a moving occasion: "I am looking forward to meeting the captain's daughter who unfortunately never got to meet her dad as she was only two years old at the time," he said.

Community venue car park revamped thanks to donations

THE management team of a building used by the community wishes to thank donors for contributing towards the cost of revamping its car park.

Four Lane Ends Mission in Bickerstaffe, which is used by numerous community groups, received £9,400 in donations to fund the improvements.

The work was carried out in two stages, the first of which took place in the spring following a grant of £8,200 from the Awards For All Big Lottery Fund.

The second stage was carried out using grants of £500 from the Duchy Of Lancaster Benevolent Fund, £500 from West Lancs Borough Council Community Chest, and £200 from the Lancashire County Council Local Member Grant Scheme.

The new-look car park has a strong porous stone surface, improved lighting, kerbs and better drainage. The old car park was said to be dark and uneven.

Edward McCarthy, of the Mission Management Team, said: "I would like to thank all our funders without which the project would not have happened.

"The Mission is growing from strength to strength with a wide range of regular groups and activities taking place; ranging from the Womens' Institute, Mother's Union, Guides, Brownies, Ormskirk Historical Society, Sporting Challenge, Bickerstaffe Parish Council and more."

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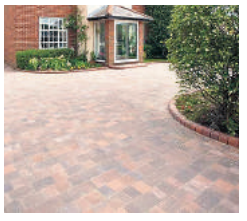

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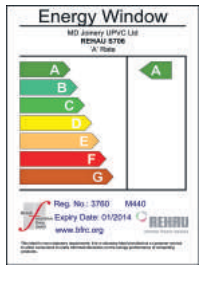

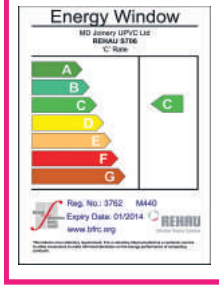

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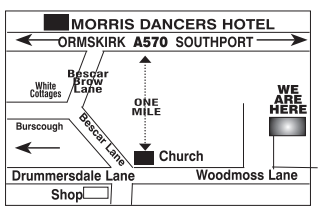

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Rail passengers urged to plan journeys ahead of latest strike action

Report by **Henry James**

RAIL passengers are being urged to plan their journeys and check before they travel ahead of planned industrial action by members of the RMT union on Merseyrail and Northern rail services today (Wednesday, January 10) and Friday, January 12.

The latest strikes in the ongoing dispute follow similar action on Monday (January 8) after the latest talks between Northern and the RMT union broke down last week.

Merseyrail services are planned to run every 30 minutes - with the exception of New Brighton to Liverpool services which will be hourly - from around 6.30am to 7.30pm, with a break in service between around 11am and 1.30pm. There will be no services on the Ormskirk-Maghull line.

Merseyrail tickets will be accepted on Arriva bus services, except between 7 and 9am and 4 and 6pm. Passengers are strongly advised to check the Merseyrail website and Twitter feed @Merseyrail before travelling, as timetables may change prior to, as well as during, the strike action.

Northern Rail will operate a reduced service, with the majority of available trains operating between 7am and 7pm. Services on some routes will finish earlier and some stations will have no service. For more information visit the Northern Rail website.

Key advice for everyone in needing to travel on these dates includes:

- Plan ahead and consider your alternative travel options.
- Check timetables and leave more time for the journey.
- Avoid travelling at peak times where possible. Don't aim for the last bus or train home as services are likely to be very busy.

The dispute is over the role of guards on the planned new trains

Andy Heath, managing director at Merseyrail, said: "I am really disappointed with the strike action being taken by the RMT that will yet again result in more disruption to your services. The timing of these latest strikes, three within a week, has been deliberately scheduled so as to cause as much impact as possible to you as a passenger.

"As always, we will ensure that we deliver as robust a timetable as we can that will best serve your travel needs."

Sharon Keith, regional director at Northern, commented: "We are doing everything we can to keep our customers on the move during the three days of industrial action affecting our network but those trains that do run will be on an amended timetable and are likely to be extremely busy.

"We ask our customers to plan carefully, allow extra time for travel and check the Northern website for the latest information."

RMT General Secretary, Mick Cash, said: "This dispute is about putting public safety before private profit and that is the message we will be sending out on the picket lines."

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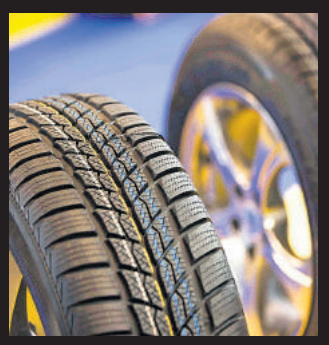

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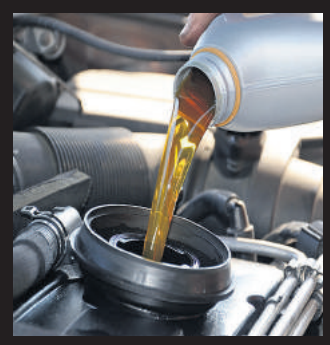

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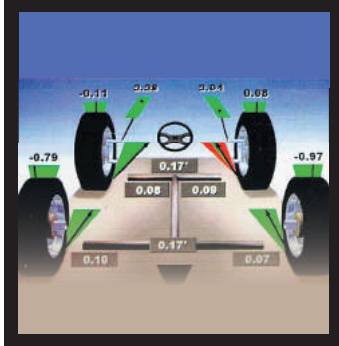

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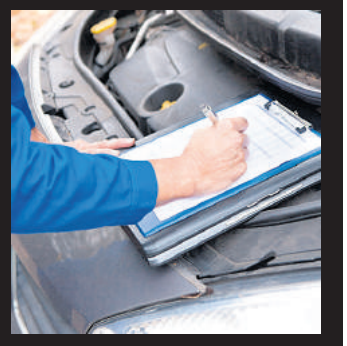

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Our West Lancashire councilors Adrian Owens and Ian Davis, and the group's Scott ward spokeswoman, Jane Thompson try out the new seating in Wheatsheaf Walk.

New town centre seating is a trial measure says council

Report by **Kenny Parker**

WEST Lancs Council has said that new seating installed in Ormskirk's town centre is being trialled as an improvement measure and is not yet a permanent feature.

Members of the Our West Lancashire independent political group recently announced that new seating on Wheatsheaf Walk had been installed following discussions between its councillors and the council on behalf of older and less-mobile town-centre shoppers.

The group also said that the council had made commitments to provide further seating for Moor Street.

However, the authority has said it is trying out the seating on Wheatsheaf Walk as part of plans to improve the gateway to Ormskrik town centre.

The council has also not made a firm decision on seating for Moor Street, although it confirms that plans are being considered.

A council spokesperson said: "West Lancashire Borough Council purchased properties in Wheatsheaf Walk in the summer of 2016 and since that date has been considering how to improve the open area which forms the gateway between Wheatsheaf car park and Burscough Street.

"As part of the process the council is presently trialling some seating which may form part of its final plans.

"The council has also recently undertaken works to improve another gateway into Ormskirk Town Centre, namely Moor Street.

"The works included the removal of the raised dais, stone planters and some associated street furniture between the junctions with Moorgate and Railway Road, making the area a more attractive gateway into the town, particularly to people who are arriving by public transport.

"Now that those works have been completed, the council is considering options for the provision of seating on Moor Street to add to the existing seating areas on Moorgate, Aughton Street and Church Street."

Meanwhile, OWL's Scott ward spokeswoman, Jane Thompson, is calling for the local authorities to address the state of the paving in parts of the town centre's pedestrianised area, in particular Aughton Street.

The West Lancs council spokesperson said: "Lancashire County Council is the highway authority and therefore is responsible for the paving in the pedestrianised areas of Ormskirk town centre. The borough council is aware of issues with the paving and has reported these to the county council on a number of occasions."

Lancashire County Council has been approached for comment.

Hard work and a loving family is Winnifred's recipe for a long life!

A FORMER Second World War air raid warden has credited "working hard and a loving family" for helping her to reach her 100th birthday.

Winnifred Hulse, who was born and grew up in Ormskirk and went to school in Skelmersdale, celebrated her centenary milestone with family and friends at the Parklands Lodge care home in Southport.

A mother-of-two, Winnifred also has four grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

The centenarian, who also worked as a midwife, moved to Manchester with husband Len, before having sons William and Derek and moving again to Southport in 1954. Derek passed away in 1994 aged 78.

To celebrate her big day, Winnifred, who received a special congratulations card from the Queen, enjoyed entertainment and a buffet and toasted the occasion with wine.

She said: "My secret is working hard and having a loving family."

Winnifred Hulse celebrating her 100th birthday with family and friends at Parklands Lodge

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History group announce January programme

ORMSKIRK Historical Society will hold their first lecture of the new year on Monday, January 15 when Glenn Hearden will present an illustrated talk entitled 'Lest We Forget - the History and Operations of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission'.

Meanwhile on Monday, January 29, local historian Alan Crosby will give an illustrated presentation entitled 'Place Names and Landscapes in Medieval Lancashire'.

The society meets at Four Land Ends Mission, Skelmersdale Road, Bickerstaffe. Annual membership is £16 but is free for students. Visitors are welcome for a fee of £3 per session.

Meetings start at 7.30pm and car parking space is available.

Eligible homeowners urged to take up Winter Warm Scheme

HOMEOWNERS in West Lancashire could be eligible to have their gas heating appliance repaired or replaced for free with the Winter Warm Scheme.

West Lancs Council has received funding from Lancashire County Council's public health team to offer the scheme for a fifth successive year.

Through the scheme owner-occupiers in the borough are being offered the opportunity to have their gas heating appliances repaired free of charge to help keep them warm and save money on their gas bills this winter.

Gas boilers can also be replaced, subject to certain conditions.

The scheme is available to qualifying owner-occupiers who are in receipt of certain benefits, who suffer with certain health conditions and do not have a plan in place that covers boiler repairs.

Councillor Kevin Wright

Councillor Kevin Wright, West Lancs Council's portfolio holder for health and community safety, said: "The West Lancs Winter Warm Scheme could really help people feel warmer in their homes and I would urge owner occupiers to check if they are eligible to apply."

Limited

Tenants cannot apply to the scheme as it is the landlords' responsibility to maintain or replace any heating appliances, including gas boilers.

Funding is limited so residents are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

For more information, including terms and conditions, visit www.westlancs.gov.uk/winterwarm.

To find out if you are eligible and apply to the West Lancs Winter Warm Scheme, contact the private sector housing team on 01695 585279 quoting the West Lancs Winter Warm Scheme.

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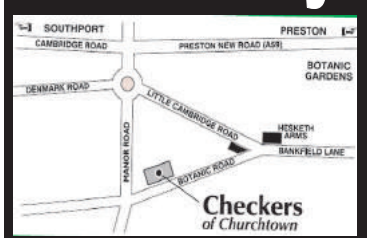

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Thumbs up! Members of the maternity services unit at Ormskirk Hospital who have been voted among the best in England following an NHS watchdog report

Mums give maternity team the thumbs up!

Ormskirk Hospital named among best in country for midwifery care

Report by **Henry James**

MOTHERS who have given birth at Ormskirk Hospital have voted it one of the best places for midwifery care in the country.

In an NHS watchdog report, mums have officially ranked maternity services at the Wigan Road site the 11th best in England - outscoring more than 50 other trusts across the country.

More than 100 mothers completed the detailed questionnaire and gave feedback on health and care, including the quality of care given throughout the antenatal, labour, birth and post-natal stages.

Mother-of-two, Louise Flavell, from Skelmersdale, is one recent example of an overjoyed mum.

As previously reported in the Champion in mid-November she had her baby Ava-Marie at the Ormskirk unit in her 34th week of pregnancy.

Louise, 42, said: "I cannot praise the neonatal staff at Ormskirk Hospital enough for the way they are looking after my gorgeous girl - thank you so much to everyone."

Ava-Marie arrived early but safely weighing just 3lbs 1oz (1.39kg) thanks to the Ormskirk maternity team detecting a condition called 'Small for Gestational Age' (SGA).

Areas the Ormskirk maternity unit scored well on included high levels of support and guidance; good advice; high levels of respect and dignity; as well as excellent care given throughout. Fathers are now also able to become more involved in their partner's care.

Lynne Eastham, head of midwifery, said: "Following the survey and our 2016 Care Quality Commission report, we focused on further improving our culture and approach to care and safety.

"We always ensure staff work better together so that the parent, baby and their family's experience can be the best possible - we want them to feel as though they are receiving a high-quality service throughout their care with us.

"From the report's findings it states that we are now ranked one of the best maternity units in the country. The experience for mothers and their partners has improved significantly over the last couple of years due to the hard work, dedication and commitment from our staff. Well done to all the teams!"

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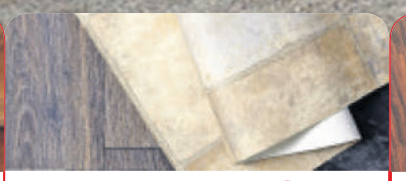

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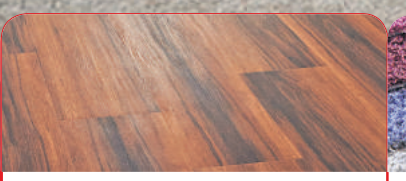

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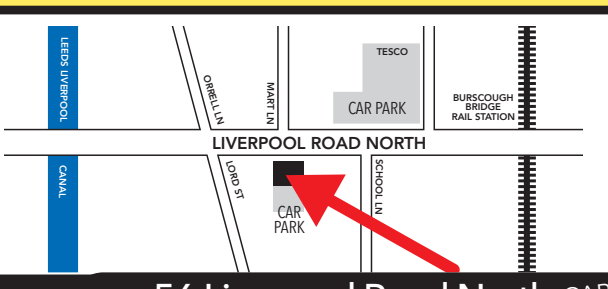

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D-Day hero reunited with prized medal!

‘Ornament’ found by grandmother walking her dog was Bob’s lost Legion of Honour award

Report by **Kenny Parker**

A SECOND World War veteran has been reunited with his cherished Legion of Honour medal, thanks to a dog walker and her grandson - with a little help from the Champion!

Bob Laverty had contacted the paper when he lost his prized medal after attending a Remembrance Sunday service at St Thomas Church in Lydiate.

The 92-year-old had been given the accolade - France’s highest honour - by the French government last year for his part in the 1944 D-Day landings.

An appeal in the Champion initially proved unsuccessful so Bob’s son, Bernard, bought him a replacement from an online company specialising in military commemoratives.

And that - so it seemed - was the end of the matter.

However, reader Lynn Buckley realised that she had picked up the original medal two weeks previously when she found it by the side of a road near to Bob’s home while out walking with her pet dog.

Believing it to be just an ornament stapled to a wreath, Lynn gave it to her five-year-old grandson Jamie.

She had been telling her grandchildren about her own parents being in the RAF and that she thought the ‘ornament’ was a replica of a medal given to those who served in the war.

Jamie duly took the medal along to his school, Town Green Primary in Aughton, to show his classmates and teachers.

But when she spotted the article in the Champion, Lynn realised her mistake and set about returning it to its rightful owner.

Jamie reunites Bob with his cherished medal

However, that proved more problematic than she envisaged when the medal went missing again!

Despite a frantic search involving numerous members of the Buckley family, it wasn’t anywhere to be found - until Lynn unexpectedly came across it a few days later when wrapping Christmas presents in a room they had not thought it would be in.

Jamie, along with his dad Adam, uncle Chris and cousins Aya and Freya, were delighted to go along and meet the war hero to reunite him with his medal.

A grateful Bob gave Jamie and his two cousins - who had helped in the search - chocolate selection boxes and a cash reward and said he was “over the moon” to be reunited with his original medal.

Meanwhile, Adam posted on social media: “What this meant to Bob will stay with us for ever.”

Got a story? Ring the Champion News Desk on 10704 392400 or email editorial@champnews.com

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Martin Mere news

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It's official! Being outdoors is great for children!

New research has shown that when children spend quality time outdoors, it affects them in lots of positive ways. The most recent research by Forest Schools, shows that children develop better social skills, confidence and self-esteem goes up and they become more aware of how to manage their own safety. Not only that – their attainment back in the classroom is better.

Many people know the calming effect of being in a peaceful woodland or fishing by a tranquil lake but now we are starting to build up a solid body of evidence based on studies done by WWT and other organisations.

At WWT Martin Mere, we welcome over 10,000 schoolchildren through our doors every year. They are always positive, enthusiastic, keen to learn. Teachers tell us that a single day's visit can motivate a whole term of follow-up work, based in and around school.

WWT has been working with a number of schools to track the changes of attitude and awareness among children who have been involved in a pond dipping session at Martin Mere or other centres. We have worked with the children and their teachers before, during and after, then a full year after their visit.

We found that over 90% of the children remembered their visit twelve months later and nearly 90% said it was fun, interesting and they had learned something new. It helped many children to overcome their misgivings about nature, for example by being able to get close to birds and feed some of them by hand. One or two children in each class even seem to have had a genuine change of heart around wildlife as a result of their visit.
We hope that by visiting Martin Mere, the natural enthusiasm of children for nature is given a booster shot which helps to propel them into a lifelong interest and commitment. So if your children have been on a visit, bring them back during the holidays. If you have been during the holidays but your children have not been with school, tell their teachers that we do trips! Who knows – one of them might be the future David Attenborough, Kate Humble or even Peter Scott!

To enquire or book an educational trip to Martin Mere please visit wwt.org.uk/learn or give us a call on 01704 891244.

Visit the web site www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere to find out what's on the reserve at the moment as well as all the upcoming events

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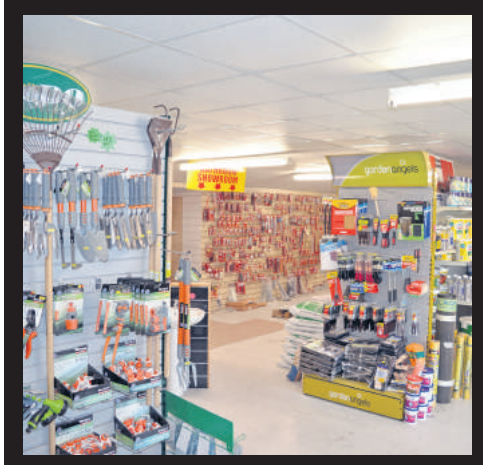

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Think twice before using A&E, urges hospital trust boss

SOUTHPORT and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust is urging people to think twice before using A&E to keep it free for the seriously ill and injured.

Winter is the busiest time of year for NHS hospitals across the country, particularly for accident and emergency departments, says the trust.

But the burden on emergency services could be made easier, if patients with minor illnesses and injuries find treatment elsewhere.

Therese Patten, the trust's Chief Operating Officer, said: "The seriously ill and injured are our priority but we continue seeing patients with minor illnesses and injuries that could be dealt with elsewhere.

Ambulances queue up outside Southport Hospital

"Cuts, bruises, sprains, coughs and colds are not normally emergencies. They can usually be treated at home with help from a pharmacist, by a GP or in a NHS walk-in centre.

"A&E is for people with medical emergencies, such as heart attacks, strokes, and serious illnesses and injuries. Patients with conditions like these will always come first, which means less serious cases may wait longer."

Ms Patten continued: "We're fortunate to have a brilliant, dedicated team here at Southport and Ormskirk. That's why I'm asking you to examine your options and keep A&E free for the seriously ill and injured. It could be you or your family who need our team's help in an emergency one day."

For alternative sources of health care and advice, the trust suggest the following:

Pharmacists: As experts in medicines they can advise on common problems, such as coughs, colds, aches and pains, as well as healthy eating and stopping smoking. They can also help you decide whether you need to see a health professional.

Family doctors: A GP or a GP out-of-hours service will help with injuries or illnesses that won't go away.

NHS walk-in centres: For people needing urgent help with minor illnesses or injuries no appointment is necessary at a walk-in centre. West Lancashire Health Centre at Ormskirk Hospital is open from 8am to 7.30pm all year round. Skelmersdale NHS Walk-in Centre at The Concourse is open from 8am to 7.30pm weekdays and from 9am to 5pm on weekends.

By phone: NHS 111 is the NHS non-emergency number. It's fast, easy and free. Call 111 and speak to a highly-trained adviser, supported by healthcare professionals. They will ask you a series of questions to assess your symptoms and immediately direct you to the best medical care for you.

Online: Visit NHS Choices or, for NHS services across West Lancashire go to the Examine Your Options website.

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MP backs call for rethink on changes to eligibility for free school meals

ROSIE Cooper is supporting the Children's Society's calls for the Government to rethink their plans for the allocation of free school meals under the Universal Credit system.

Currently, as the new benefit is rolled out, all children who live in households receiving Universal Credit are eligible for a free school meal.

However, proposals set out in a consultation by the Department for Education, will see an earnings threshold of £7,400 introduced for all new Universal Credit claimants from April 2018.

And, according to figures supplied by the Children's Society, this will result in nearly 23,000 children across Lancashire missing out on free school meals.

The Labour party is calling on the Government to ensure that no child goes hungry during the school day, by ensuring that every child in a family receiving Universal Credit is eligible for free school meals.

Report by **Henry James**

And West Lancs MP Ms Cooper said: "Labour have always stood up for the benefits of free school meals on a child's education and health and alleviating persistent child poverty levels in our society. That is why the current proposals on the future of free school meals under Universal Credit are deeply concerning and show how this Government is out of touch with the importance to seriously address poverty levels across the country.

"These changes will affect many families across West Lancashire, especially the poorest in our society, and it is important the Government rethinks their approach. Ministers must hear the views of local people on this matter and how we should be alleviating poverty, not entrenching it."

Rosie Cooper MP

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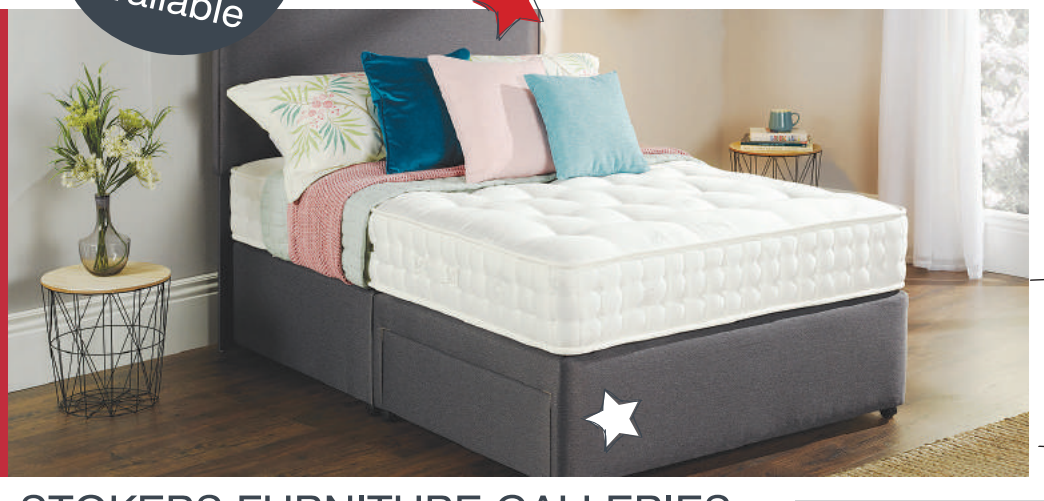

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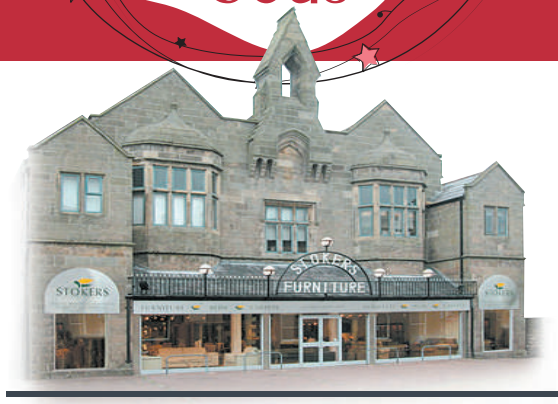

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9th Sept	**Great Malvern** (Abbey Hotel)	4 days	**£295**
14th Sept	**Blackpool** (Park House Hotel)	4 days	**£219**
28th Sept	**Llandudno** (St Kilda Hotel)	4 days	**£259**
5th Oct	**Scottish All Inclusive near Loch Lomond** (Winnock Hotel)	4 days	**£279**
6th Oct	**Jersey by Air** (Mayfair Hotel)	8 days	**£519**
31st Oct	**Lakes in Autumn** (Skiddaw Hotel)	3 days	**£197**

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First residents move in to 'affordable' homes development

THE first residents have moved in to a development of 'affordable' new homes in the borough built through a partnership between housing associations, a developer and West Lancs Council.

Dawn and Hellina receive the keys to their new home from Torus officials Rob Young and Graham Burgess and Councillor Jenny Forshaw

Owned and managed by the Torus Housing Group - a collaboration between Merseyside-based Helena Partnerships and Cheshire's Golden Gates housing assocations - Roseacre Gardens in Rufford is a mix of two and three-bedroom homes, for rent and shared ownership.

The partners worked with developer Jones Homes to create the homes after being brought together by West Lancs Council.

Nurse Dawn Williams and her 10-year-old daughter, Helina, were given the keys to their new two-bedroom rented home by Torus chief executive, Rob Young and chairman, Graham Burgess, along with Councillor Jenny Forshaw, the council's portfolio holder for housing and landlord services.

Dawn, who has lived in Rufford for 16 years, said: "We needed to move out of our previous home at the end of November but finding somewhere we could afford was tough.

" My daughter goes to the local primary school and we're both really involved in the local community, so leaving the village was the last thing we wanted to do.

"These homes are perfect, spacious and within our budget too and being able to move in for Christmas was just the best present ever."

Rob Young said: "Providing affordable housing for local people is a key priority for Torus and we're proud of the work we do with local councils like West Lancashire to help people rent and buy more affordably. It was a pleasure to meet Dawn and her daughter Helina and we hope they'll be very happy in their new home."

Tenants for the rented homes will be nominated by the council with initial priority given to people with a local connection to Rufford.

Councillor Forshaw commented: "The council is really pleased that these families were able to move into their new homes in time for Christmas. I am sure it made the festive season even more special for them."

Torus says that all the shared ownership properties on the development have been sold and five more homes will be released in spring.

Anyone interested in renting a home from Torus will need to register with West Lancs Homefinder at www.westlancshomefinder.co.uk.

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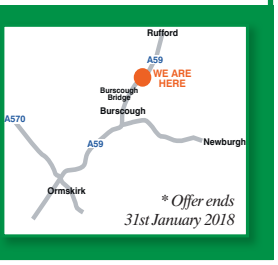

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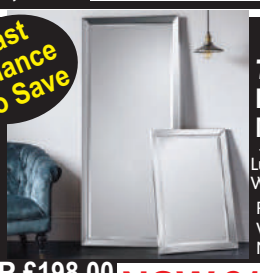

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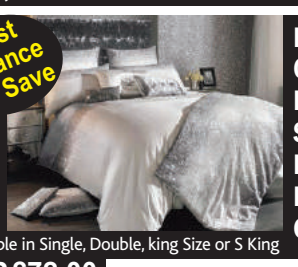

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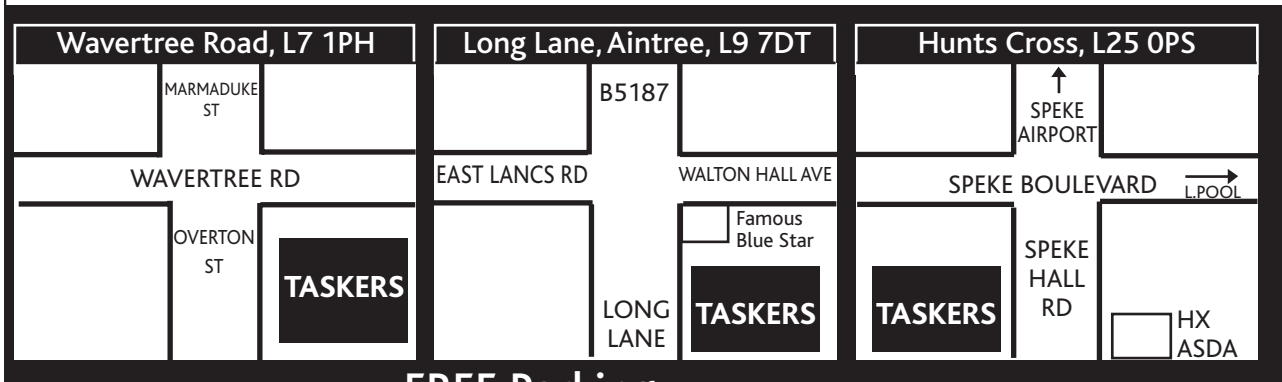

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Champion LETTERS to the Editor

Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport PR9 0QA
tel 01704 392 400 email editor@champnews.com

County council won't meet with residents group to discuss flooding problems

WITH regards to your recent article about flooding ('Neighbours in battle to stop flood misery at their homes' - Champion, January 3), I believe the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) are a disgrace.

Following the 2015 Boxing Day flooding, Lancashire County Council, as LLFA, refused to accept flooding information from Burscough Flooding Group which we had supplied for inclusion in the county council's S19 Boxing Day 2015 flooding report.

Burscough flooded comprehensively on Boxing Day 2015 but because United Utilities had sent their telephone operators home most of the flooding, which was from surface and foul water sewers, wasn't collected by United Utilities.

Through Lancashire County Council refusing residents' data supplied by Burscough Flooding Group, they reduced the number of potential flood investigations they would have to carry out!

For example, the county council actually only recorded approximately three problems rather than the 100-plus reported by residents.

And they picked those such as Ainscough Mill, whose problems were solved at great expense by United Utilities.

Therefore, the S19 report inaccurately painted Lancashire County Council's work as overseeing a successful resolution of Burscough's problems!

Incidentally, the county council won't meet with Burscough Flooding Group anymore to discuss flooding problems, because, just like David Jonker from Ormskirk, we found that they won't answer difficult questions such as: When are you going to investigate or solve the huge number of flooding problems in Burscough? And why did you refuse to include all of the flooding information you were given in your S19 Boxing Day 2015 report?

Gavin Rattray,
secretary Burscough Flooding Group

Don't leave children vulnerable to online dangers with their new Christmas presents

A RECENT YouGov study for Barnardo's has found that barely half of adults who bought Internet connected presents for children this Christmas will check who the youngsters are communicating with online.

While more than 80% of those who had bought or planned to buy an Internet connected gift for a child said they were aware that strangers could contact and connect with the child through them, just 55% said they would monitor who the youngsters were talking to.

Almost 10% of those surveyed intended to buy an Internet connected gift for a child this Christmas, meaning as many as four million such devices, including iPhones and tablets, were given to youngsters this year, with more than half bought for a child aged 10 or under.

Barnardo's has long been calling to make the Internet safer and for parents to be more aware of mobile technology children are using and who they're talking to online. Our concern is that the digital revolution is enabling the sexual abuse and exploitation of children and young people via the internet and mobile devices.

Last year, Barnardo's supported almost 3,500 people nationally through its child sexual exploitation support services, an increase of 38% on the previous year.

Internet connected devices like tablets and iPhones can also come in the guise of harmless dolls or teddies and potentially allow strangers to pinpoint your address, obtain your child's name and birthday, download their photograph and even listen in on conversations.

We are not saying 'don't allow your children to enjoy these toys or devices', but we are urging parents and relatives to ensure their children are as safe as possible by ensuring privacy settings are at maximum and that they monitor who their child is communicating with.

Lynn Perry,
Barnardo's North West Regional Director

Rail-travelling public set to suffer again

THE public is once again going to be subject to further rail strikes over the issue of train drivers opening doors and the RMT union is again putting out misinformation.

The rail companies have agreed that trains will always have a second man on board unless in very special circumstances they will travel with just the driver.

It should be recalled that London underground trains operate with a driver only.

The real reason that the RMT want to retain the guard operating train doors is that in industrial disputes guards can call in sick and stop trains running without losing pay. They know well that with drivers operating train doors their ability to disrupt trains will be limited.

It should be added that over the last five years whilst public sector workers have been subject to 1% pay rises with increased workloads, rail workers have received about inflation rises whilst holding on to restrictive practices.

As a further point Virgin train crews are striking because they are rejecting a pay rise of 3.6%.

J. M. Berry, Aughton

PICTURE of the week

Three walkers and their dog managed to avoid the an impromptu sea spray shower as Storm Eleanor whipped up last Wednesday's high tide in Southport. Picture by Martyn Snape.

Drop us a line

IF you've got a view on a topic of local or national interest which you would like to share with the readers of the Champion, why not drop us a line?

Letters to the editor should be concise, preferably no more than 350 words, and should include the sender's name, address and contact details, although not necessarily for publication.

The editor reserves the right to edit all items submitted for favour of publication.

Correspondents preferring not to have their name and/or their address published may provide a suitable nom de plume.

Letters can be posted or emailed to the respective addresses listed at the top of this page.

■ PLEASE note: All views and opinions expressed in letters to the editor are solely those of the authors.

Gauging people's views on Brexit was an interesting experience

IT was an interesting experience for John Watt, William Gilmore and myself to stand in Ormskirk town centre on a cold December Saturday handing out leaflets about a 'lost cause'.

This refers to our impending departure from the EU (i.e. Brexit).

On the face of it, the question has been decided once and for all by the referendum which, by a narrow majority, committed us to leave the European Union. So why were three or four of us asking people how they feel now about a cut-and-dried decision?

Lots of passers-by ignored us but a surprising number were keen to share their opinions. It was quite clear that many young people were extremely worried about their futures in a UK faced with fast-rising prices and probable unemployment.

Some older folk had voted to leave and had no regrets. Lots more were really sorry they had voted 'out' and now realise it was an enormous mistake.

And even more had voted to remain and were now sure that Britain is facing a catastrophe outside the EU.

The outcome is still uncertain because there are several things which could block Brexit. The present government is led by a deeply-divided Conservative Party and could collapse at any moment - that would take us back to square one. And the Electoral Commission is investigating whether the Leave campaign broke the law on election spending.

We're glad we had the chance to chat with a large number of people and take a snapshot of their views on a matter which will determine our future for years and decades and maybe even centuries to come.

Our only hope is that Brexit will not happen.

Maurice George, by email

Leaving the EU was never a simple black and white question

IT is necessary to respond to the series of pro-Brexit correspondents to represent more accurately the balance of opinion throughout the UK and West Lancashire, especially when one bears in mind that only 37% of the electorate voted for Brexit.

It was never a simple black and white question and the different Brexit options were not adequately understood at any level so this is maybe one reason many chose not to vote.

That said, the adverse effects on Britain are now clear from available 'facts' as opposed to the 'speculation and misinformation' suggested (Letters, December 20).

The imagined trade benefits when faced with imports of low-regulation agricultural produce, which themselves threaten our own food industry, would seem to be to fall into exactly this realm of fantasy.

But already there has been a 4% rise in food inflation and the UK now has the lowest growth rate in Europe.

Despite the 24,000 nursing vacancies being available for UK employees to take up, the gap is likely to increase further with a huge drop in nursing applications from the EU.

None of the correspondents seem to have given any thought as to the consequences to the citizens of the island of Ireland and the irreconcilable elements lurking ahead in future negotiations.

It is also necessary to condemn the despicable and shameful Home Office treatment of so many EU nationals who have been settled for years in this country and which seems to be responsible for fostering the hostile attitudes.

Dr John Watt, Ormskirk

‘Plot’ your way to a healthier you in 2018!

Community group urges more people to join borough’s growing numbers of allotment tenants

Report by **Henry James**

THE West Lancashire Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) is encouraging people to ‘grow their way to health’ and take up an allotment in the borough this New Year.

The number of allotments in West Lancs has increased since 2009, thanks to the work of local organisations such as West Lancs CVS Community Food Growing project and the West Lancs Allotment Federation.

There are now 366 plots at 24 different sites - a marked increase on the 109 plots at nine sites in 2009.

A study by Westminster and Essex universities has found that those who spent as little as 30 minutes a week in their allotments saw significant improvement in mental well-being, and had fewer weight problems than those who did not garden.

Committed

Martin Trengove of West Lancs CVS said: “Most sites these days offer half-size or even quarter-size plots for novices to cut their teeth on (a standard allotment plot is 250 square metres).

“More and more people are also now involving the whole family in helping out on their allotment plots and many sites actively encourage all the family, including children, to come down and get growing. It costs less than a £1 a week to rent a plot, less for smaller sized plots, but you do need to be committed to keeping your plot in good order for your benefit and also that of your plot neighbour.

“Although most sites have a waiting list for plots, some sites towards the west of the borough in Up Holland (St Teresa's Allotment Group); Roby Mill (Roby Mill Community Allotment Group); and in Appley Bridge (Appley Bridge Allotment Society) do have vacancies.

“If you are interested in applying for one of their vacant plots for 2018, you can find contact details on the West Lancs CVS website: www.wlcvs.org (follow the links to ‘community food growing’).

“West Lancashire also has a number of communal sites where people work the land together and take a share of the crop. This suits those who don’t have much free time but still want the advantages of growing their own food.

“One such site is the Community Farm at Burscough which grows organically and is now into its fourth year. The farm has a number of ways to get involved, ranging from being a volunteer to help tend and harvest the produce and then take a share home in the form of a weekly veg basket, to joining as a member and paying for a weekly veg box.”

To keep up to date with what’s going on in West Lancashire’s allotments, you can sign up for the quarterly ‘Dig-In’ e-bulletin produced by the CVS as part of the Active West Lancs programme funded by Lancashire County Council and delivered by West Lancashire Borough Council.

To be added to the distribution list, email martint@wlcvs.org or phone Martin Trengove or Debbie Shepton at the CVS on 01695 733737.

A West Lancashire allotment site

Teatime date for civic couple

THE Mayor and Mayoress of West Lancashire, Councillor Neil and Mrs Julie Furey, will attend a function in aid of the mayor’s chosen charities at O’Brien’s Tea Rooms in Park Road, Ormskirk on Friday, January 12 from 6.45pm.

Got a story? Ring the News Desk on 01704 392400

Care trust welcomes sex education consultation

LANCASHIRE Care NHS Foundation Trust’s sexual health service has welcomed news that a consultation has been launched to try to revamp out-of-date guidelines on what children should be taught in sex and relationship lessons.

This follows the announcement earlier this year that the Government is to make sex education compulsory in all schools in England.

Education minister, Justine Greening, said that legislation will be introduced that will ensure all children from the age of four will be taught about safe and healthy relationships, and children in secondary schools will be given age-appropriate lessons about sex.

Amy Nolan, service manager for the Contraception and Sexual Health (CaSH) service at Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust, said: “We are delighted by this announcement. Our CaSH service is well placed to support schools with this development.”

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Golden year for taekwondo club and coach

Claire and students toast belt-ing success!

Report by **Kenny Parker**

Claire and Josh pictured with their Lancashire Sports awards

THE coach and members of a West Lancashire taekwondo club are celebrating a year of breaking more than just wooden boards after winning a host of competitions and awards.

The Burscough-based Streetwise club has shattered all its previous awards records with success at a string of national and international competitions, rounded off by coach Claire Howard being named Lancashire Sports Coach of the Year.

Formed in 2000, the club has recently moved into and refurbished its own premises in New Lane, following a personal investment from Claire, who is a fourth dan black belt, and the help of students' parents and friends.

In the past year, the club has entered 11 major UK competitions and has been placed third overall in one, second overall in two and first overall in two.

As well as competing in the International Taekwondo Championships in Northern Ireland, club members also competed at the Portugal Open Taekwondo Championship in November and came away with one gold, four silver and three bronze medals between them.

Four members of the club were also chosen to represent Great Britiain at the European Poomsae Championships in Rhodes in May where 12-year-old Joshua Tobin got a Silver medal.

Joshua was also honoured along with Claire at the Lancashire Sports Awards where he received the West Lancs Young Achiever of the Year award.

Dave Edmundson, chair of the Lancashire Sports Awards Judging Panel, said: "The panel were very impressed with Claire's nomination. Her dedication to the sport and her students was evident from the amount of time and effort she put into the club, even self-funding the redevelopment of her own space for the club.

"The panel were also impressed with the number of students she has supported to regional, national and international events as well as supporting other students to take on judging and teaching roles.

"Claire works tirelessly to ensure all her students are supported to reach their potential and it's testament to her that one of her students was also nominated in the awards this year as the West Lancashire Young Achiever of the Year.

And Claire was quick to acknowledge the support she and the members have received in their record-breaking year.

She said: "It's been a fantastic year. We are lucky to have such a great club, great support from parents and such a commitment from the students."

For information about classes contact Claire on 07967 995 072.

Family's cars targeted in Christmas night vandal attack

A WEST Lancashire woman says she has been left shaken and perplexed after her family's cars were vandalised in what police say was a targeted attack believed to have taken place on Christmas Day evening.

When Laura Shields and her family returned to their home in Trevor Road, Burscough late on Christmas night they didn't notice any damage to the cars left on the driveway.

However, the following morning Laura discovered that both her partner's Audi A4 and her daughter's fiance's Vauxhall Astra had had their windscreens smashed.

The remains of a red brick could be seen around the cars and each window appeared to have been smashed about three or four times.

Laura, who has lived in the village all her life, says her neighbours were also out until late and she believes the attacks must have taken place some time during the evening.

Police have told her they believe it was a targeted attack and she is concerned that whoever vandalised the vehicles might strike again.

She said: "We left the TV and the lights on so they must have thought somebody was in so what's to say they are not going to come back again?

"Police have said it was a targeted attack and it would seem it was quite frenzied, both cars had obviously been hit three or four times. It seems whoever carried out these attacks was very angry, but why? We really don't know!"

The cars damaged outside the house in Trevor Road, Burscough, on Christmas Day.

A spokesperson for Lancashire Constabulary confirmed that officers are investigating and have appealed for anyone with information to ring 101, quoting log number 0362/December 26.

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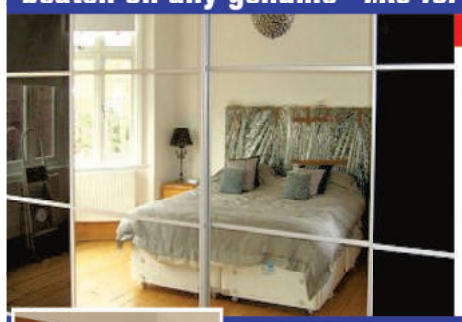

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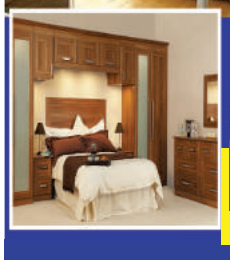

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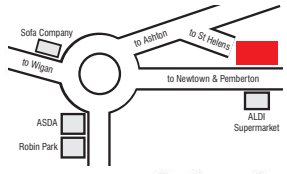

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Call for extra care on winter walks along the towpaths

Report by **Henry James**

A typical winter scene on the Rufford branch of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal

THE Canal & River Trust is calling on people to enjoy the waterways safely this winter by taking extra care on towpaths.

Given the potential for low temperatures and wet and windy conditions, it's important to wrap up warm and check the weather before heading for a walk or run along a towpath.

Tony Stammers, head of safety at the Canal & River Trust, said: "As the temperature drops, our waterways look beautiful in the frost and snow and the towpath is a perfect place to head for a winter walk.

"However, with the cold temperatures and the dark afternoons and nights, it's even more important to take care and stay safe when out and about.

"Look out for icy conditions. Towpaths, bridges and lock-sides can become slippery at this time of year and snow can conceal boat mooring rings and ropes.

"And whilst frozen canals look beautiful, obviously no-one should ever attempt to walk on or test the thickness of the ice."

The trust has issued the following tips:

- **Whether running or walking, be safe and tell someone where you are heading – take your mobile phone.**
- **The towpath can be slippery when wet and icy so wear sturdy footwear and be careful where you tread.**
- **Daylight draws in fast during the winter months so keep an eye on the time.**
- **Ice will not support your weight. Do not step on the ice and never follow a pet onto the ice.**

To find out more about staying safe near the water go to https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/safety-on-our-waterways/winter-water-safety.

For more information about teaching children how to stay safe near water go to https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/water-safety.

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Primary school places applications reminder

LANCASHIRE County Council is reminding parents that the closing date for online primary school place applications is Monday, January 15.

Application forms need to be submitted for all children starting school, even if the child already has an older brother or sister at their preferred school.

For more information go to the website at www.lancashire.gov.uk/schools, or call 0300 123 6707.

Parents whose children attend Lancashire primary schools or academies, but live in another local authority area, should apply through the local authority where they live.

Tributes to former grammar school deputy head and Martin Mere volunteer Enid

by **Kenny Parker**

TRIBUTES have been paid to a former deputy head of Ormskirk Grammar School who has died at the age of 84.

Enid Pimblett became the first former pupil to go on to hold a senior teaching post when she was appointed in 1973 and also taught geology and geography at the school which amalgamated with Cross Hall High in 2001 to form Ormskirk School.

After retiring from teaching in 1988 she continued to use her skills as a volunteer at the Martin Mere Wildfowl Trust's Education Centre.

A life-long bird watcher, spinster Enid also travelled extensively, volunteered with the Soroptimists organisation and was in charge of the Missionary Society at St Michael's Church, Aughton, where she was a member of the Wednesday Fellowship Group and a chorister.

Former Ormskirk Grammar School deputy head, Enid Pimblett, who has passed away at the age of 84.

For the last five years she had lived at Stocks Hall Residential Home in Ormskirk, where she passed away peacefully on December 18.

Victoria Fellowes, marketing manager at WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre, said: "Enid was a well-liked and respected member of the volunteering team at Martin Mere and we are all saddened by her death.

"Her background as a deputy head teacher gave her the perfect experience in supporting the education department at Martin Mere helping to get thousands of school children engaged with and enthusiastic about nature.

"Not only was she active at the centre, but she also joined the Friends of Martin Mere group, developing and creating their newsletters and helping to fundraise for the centre, especially on big projects such as the Harrier Hide development.

"Enid was known to many staff and volunteers at the centre and she will be sadly missed."

Enid's funeral will be held at St Michael's Church, Aughton, at 2.45pm on Friday (January 12).

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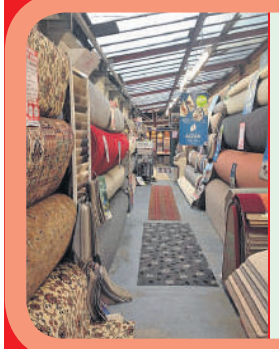

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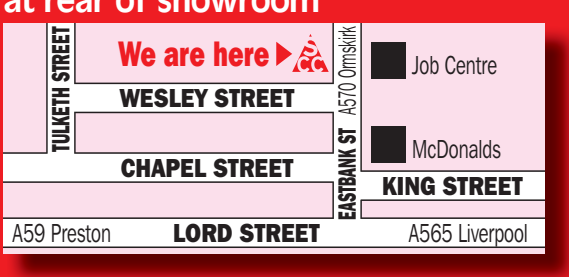

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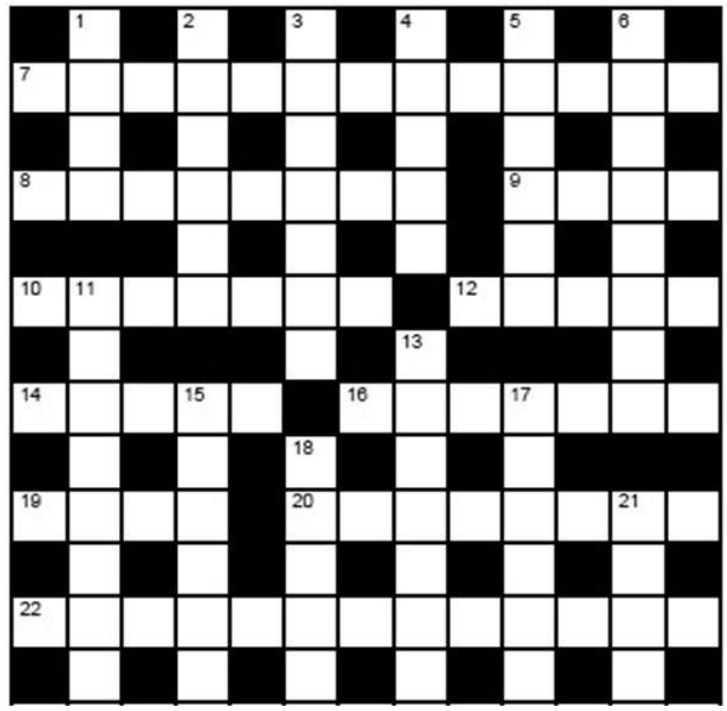

Last week's solutions:
Across: 7. Vagary. 8. Cravat. 9. Jowl. 10. Adultery. 11. Y-fronts. 13. Delta. 15. Close. 17. Gunners. 20. Eternity. 21. Cove. 22. Circle. 23. Offend.
Down: 1. Far-off. 2. Tail. 3. Dynasty. 4. Scrum. 5. Pantheon. 6. Carrot. 12. Obstruct. 14. Jury box. 16. Let rip. 18. Ravine. 19. Siren. 21. Cuff.

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ACROSS

7. The state of being aware of and responsive to one's surroundings (13)
8. Forbearance, resignation (8)
9. Feeling of sorrow and compassion towards the sufferings and misfortunes of others (4)
10. Restrain from doing or enjoying something (7)
12. One of the gifts brought by the Magi to baby Jesus (5)
14. Wooden packing case (5)
16. Authorised permit to do something (7)
19. Passport endorsement (4)
20. The directing of a patient to a specialist by a GP (8)
22. In a compassionate manner (4-9)

DOWN

1. A stupid person (4)
2. To help in a task (6)
3. Supplementary or rebel military force (7)
4. To feign a pass in rugby (5)
5. Concise, succinct (6)
6. Intended for or likely to be understood only by those with specialist knowledge (8)
11. The outer defence of a castle or walled city and the name of a performing arts centre in London (8)
13. Fail to produce the intended result (7)
15. A deeply distressing or disturbing experience (6)
17. Gained or acquired through merit or hard work (6)
18. Avarice (5)
21. Rod or spindle (fixed or rotating) passing through the centre of a wheel or wheels (4)

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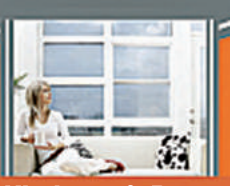

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Check your details are correct on electoral roll

WEST Lancs Council is urging residents in the borough to check that their details are correct on the 2018 Register of Electors.

The revised version of the Register of Electors is available for inspection, under supervision, during normal office hours at the council offices at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk (Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm and Fridays 9am to 4.45pm).

You can also check your details by calling 01695 585014.

Council elections are scheduled to take place in 18 of the borough's 25 wards on Thursday, May 3. People who are not on the Register of Electors will not be able to vote in these elections. Not being on the Register of Electors may also affect your credit score.

Electoral Registration Officer Kim Webber

West Lancs Electoral Registration Officer, Kim Webber, said: "You need to be on the electoral roll to have your say in the upcoming West Lancashire Borough Council elections, and incorrect details may result in residents not being able to vote – so it really is worth taking the time to check."

For more information about the Register of Electors, requesting a postal or proxy vote application or changing details on the register if they are incorrect, contact Electoral Services on 01695 585014 or email elections.office@westlancs.gov.uk

To find out more about registering to vote go to website www.westlancs.gov.uk/registertovote or www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

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Survey aims to drive mental health service improvements

NHS community mental health services users are being encouraged to take part in a survey to drive future improvements.

Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust is carrying out the 2018 Community Mental Health Survey to find out what people who use these services think about the care they receive. Led by the Care Quality Commission, the survey is part of a national programme to improve mental health services.

This year the survey will be sent to 850 people aged 18 and over who have recently used the trust's services. Those chosen to take part will receive a copy of the questionnaire to complete between February and June.

The results of the survey will be presented in a form that does not allow any individual's answers to be identified and will be published by the CQC in November and shared by the trust.

Dawn Kenyon, quality improvement and experience manager at Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We hope that the people who use our services here in Lancashire will take the time to help us with this survey.

"If you or someone you care for receive one of our surveys and has a query or requires any further information, please get in touch with us."

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SUPERKING WAS ~~£1199~~ SALE PRICE £799

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KINGSIZE WAS ~~£1049~~ SALE PRICE £699

SUPERKING WAS ~~£1249~~ SALE PRICE £899

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Extreme Luxury Medium/Firm Handmade Turnable 3000 Pocket Sprung Mattress upholstered with the finest Cashmere, Silk, Mohair, Wool and Horsehair complete with 2 Drawer Base in a choice of fabrics

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OLD BED RECYCLING SERVICE

Paddington made Yuletide viewing a lot more bearable!

I SUPPOSE I owe the television companies some kind of apology - though I'm still afraid I'll now have to wait until Christmas this year to be able to re-record *The Grinch* or *The Polar Express*, both of which were sadly lacking from the Yuletide schedules this time around for the first time I can remember for years.

Still, for me at least, two programmes screened early in this new year actually made up for those two shocking omissions. Of course, neither were on what you would call the 'major' stations, but happily I managed not to miss them anyway.

First up - and I very nearly didn't bother with it because I assumed it would be a Disney-style cartoon version - was the excellent production of *Paddington* on Film 4 on Boxing Day and again on New Year's Day.

This featured Hugh Bonneville, Sally Hawkins and Nichole Kidman, plus the voice of Ben Wishaw as the admittedly 'cartoon' small bear. But this was not a Disney bear at all. It looked and moved like a real bear - and I at least found it very easy actually to believe it WAS a real bear.

Except, perhaps, for one thing - and that not a bad thing at all.

Because this Paddington reminded me very strongly of my adopted Collie, Cinders. If you were lucky enough to see this production you will have a really good impression not only of the way little Cinders looks and behaves generally, but also in her sometimes gross eating habits also!

As far as marmalade sandwiches go, I don't think Cinders has ever had the opportunity to try them - I am pretty certain though that if she ever does, she will share Paddington's enthusiasm for this particular delicacy.

Truthfully, I was very near to tears when Paddington was apparently about to be stuffed and mounted - only of course to be rescued at the last minute.

If you have seen this excellent film I hope you share my enthusiasm for it. If you haven't and get the opportunity so to do, I heartily recommend it.

The other film, *A Christmas Carol* on BBC 4 on New Year's Day, I have seen before but was more than happy to watch again.

In my opinion, this adaptation of Charles Dickens' Christmas ghost story by Clive Donner is quite the best, sticking most nearly to the original plot. And George C Scott's portrayal of Ebenezer Scrooge is masterful - though Alistair Sim's Scrooge in the classic 1951 film does take some beating.

Why we had to wait for it until a week after Christmas I really don't know - but it was worth waiting for.

On another old tack though, not everything in my world has got off to a good start in 2018. You may remember some time ago I related my woes brought on by my GP asking me to go for a blood test. Well, just before Christmas a mix-up in my prescription led to my GP asking for a further blood test, which had to be booked by me at the Westway Health Centre in Maghull.

I won't bore you with all the ins and outs of what occurred this time, but the fact is that in an hour's time or so I will be setting out, again, for my local Boots chemist, hopefully this time to pick up my prescription. Assuming all goes well, this will mean that what started out as a simple picking up of a repeat prescription from my local chemist, will have involved me in six one-and-a-half-mile walks, two in freezing cold and one in lashing rain.

I suppose all this could be said to prove that whatever medicines I have been prescribed are working, since I have managed all this without incident (apart from being cold, wet and fed up). But I am still committed to yet another walk to the surgery where the practice nurse wants to check up on how I am faring.

My mind boggles.

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Slimming World consultants, Tina Whewell, Sue Allt, and Paula Skalycz get up close with singer Peter Andre

Peter sings praises of slimming gurus

Report by **Henry James**

A GROUP of slimming consultants from West Lancashire enjoyed the chance to get up close with Peter Andre when he co-hosted the annual Slimming World Awards with the organisation's founder and chair, Margaret Miles-Bramwell OBE.

The team, who run Slimming World groups in Lydiate, Ormskirk and Skelmersdale, were delighted to get a chance to cuddle up to the *Mysterious Girl* singer at the event at Birmingham's International Convention Centre.

Tina Whewell, who runs the group's Ormskirk classes, said Peter's presence at the awards was special because of his earlier support for Slimming World's most successful fundraising event ever, The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw, which raised a record-breaking £3.3m in just two weeks.

The annual clothes throw encourages Slimming World's 900,000 group members to donate the clothes, shoes, bags and accessories that are now too big for them to Cancer Research UK, by filling up specially-branded bags and taking them along to their weekly group sessions.

Tina said; "We couldn't be prouder of our members. Throughout 2017 they have lost fantastic amounts of weight, with many of them hitting their target weights, improving their health and boosting their confidence.

"Every week we feel extremely lucky to play even a small part in people's achievements and we felt very honoured to represent our Slimming World groups at the Slimming World Awards.

"Cuddling up to Peter was a real treat. He was bowled over by the difference Slimming World makes to people's lives and it reminded us what important and privileged roles we have as consultants.

Peter, who set up his own foundation with Cancer Research UK, the Peter Andre Fund, after losing his brother to cancer, said he was thrilled to meet the Slimming World Consultants.

Bumper bingo night raises £1,200 to help fund nursing home activities

A SPECIAL Christmas bingo raised a bumper four-figure sum towards inspirational activities for residents at a West Lancashire nursing home.

Residents, staff, relatives and members of the public attend the regular bingo sessions held at Burscough's Stanley Institute in aid of the Stocks Hall Nursing Home in Liverpool Road South.

December's event had a festive theme with prizes including food hampers, vouchers, and cosmetic, household and personal gifts, and raised a magnificent £1,200 which will help to provide activities for people at the home.

Stocks Hall housekeeper, Karen Webster, said: "The bingo events are always very special and we are, as ever, very thankful to all the local businesses who support us with their generous donations of prizes. "

Some of the bingo players who helped to raise £1,200 at the Stocks Hall Nursing Home Christmas event

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Putting on the style – some of the sixth formers from Ormskirk and Maghull who attended the St Mary's winter ball

Students swap classroom grammar for catwalk glamour

SIXTH formers swapped classroom concentration for catwalk style at this year's St Mary's College winter ball.

Uniforms were consigned to wardrobes at home as students donned dinner jackets, suits and long dresses for the glittering occasion at the Marriott Hotel in Liverpool city centre.

Around 100 sixth formers from across the Crosby college's wide catchment area - including a strong Ormskirk and Maghull contingent - attended the ball which had a winter wonderland theme.

Principal, Mike Kennedy, said: "The winter ball is an excellent opportunity for our sixth formers to take time out from their A-level studies and celebrate with their friends..

"I would like to thank the students and staff who helped to organise the ball for all the hard work they put in to making it such a successful event."

Police looking to recruit 200 new officers in 2018/19

LANCASHIRE Police has opened a recruitment process aimed at attracting in the region of 200 new officers in 2018/2019.

The force is looking for people from a wide range of backgrounds with the right life experience and skills, including compassion, integrity, technology, languages and problem-solving.

Bosses are aiming to attract those who have a caring background and desire to help people regardless of circumstances and who have the resilience to get to the root cause of a problem.

Deputy Chief Constable, Sunita Gamblin, said: "It's important we attract the right people from different backgrounds to help us keep people safe by responding to, meeting the needs of and understanding all cultures and lifestyles within Lancashire.

"Policing is highly rewarding. The rapid development of technology is changing the face of crime. It presents opportunities to develop in core services such as response, local policing and investigation, with pathways that lead into specialisms such as CID, firearms, roads policing, dog handling and more."

Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner, Clive Grunshaw, added: "This is an important investment in Lancashire Police and into front-line policing across the county.

"The public need to know that they are being policed by officers who understand and relate to them. We want to see applications from people of all backgrounds and it is a chance to recruit officers from under-represented communities.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to work for one of the best police forces in the country and play a key role in helping to keep the people of Lancashire safe."

Following the recruitment process, training will commence throughout 2018 and 2019 and the new officers will be posted right across Lancashire.

Applicants can apply online at Lancashire.police.uk/policeofficer until Friday, January 19.

Sexual health team in call for young people to get tested for 'unwanted Christmas presents'

OFFICIALS at Lancashire Care Trust's Contraception and Sexual Health (CaSH) service for under-25s are calling on young people to get tested for 'unwanted Christmas presents' on National STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) Day.

National STI Day (January 14) is two weeks after the Christmas and New Year party season when many people have unprotected sex. And with Valentine's Day just a month away, the county's CaSH service is encouraging young people to have a full check-up, including HIV and syphilis testing.

Amy Nolan from CaSH said: "National STI Day is a great opportunity for young people in Lancashire who may have had unplanned or unsafe sex over the festive period to get tested.

"The Christmas and New Year party season can lead to unprotected sex which increases the risk of getting sexually transmitted infections like gonorrhoea and chlamydia, leading to possible complications in later life. Common STIs like chlamydia can take two weeks to be detectable so getting tested in mid-January is the right time."

To contact your local CaSH team, book an appointment or find out about 'drop-ins,' call 01772 401140. To find out more about services in your area, visit www.best2know.co.uk.

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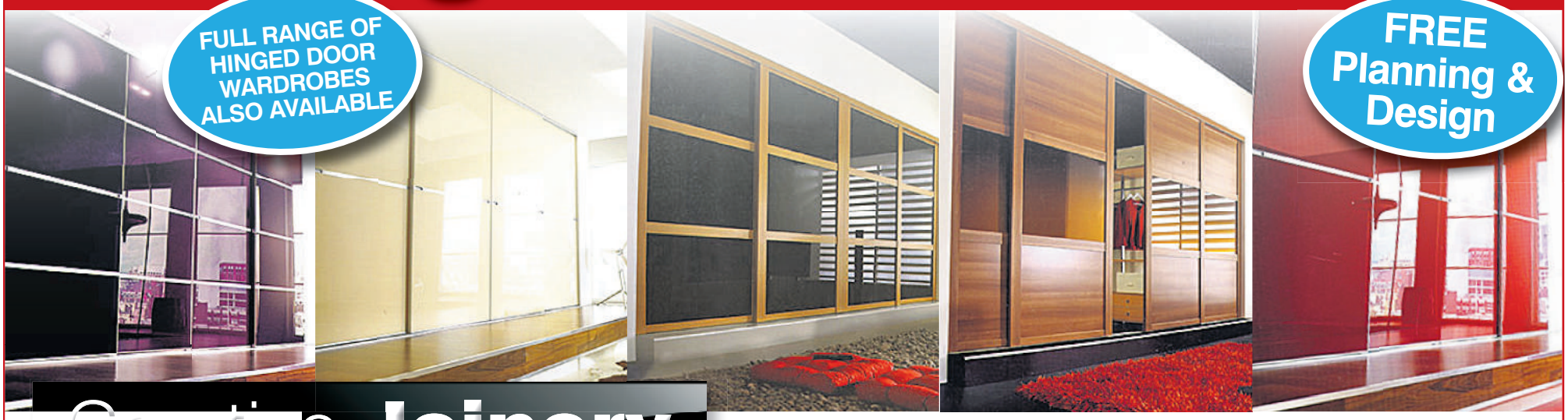

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Sister thanks Champ readers for supporting African orphanage

Report by **Kenny Parker**

SISTER Margaret Rose has thanked Champion readers for their continued support for the Gorsilaure Project, a charity which cares for destitute orphans in The Democratic Republic of Congo.

The 75-year-old, a member of the Sister of Notre Dame congregation in Parbold, helped to launch the charity 18 years ago and makes regular appeals to the people of West Lancashire for funds through our columns - most recently in December.

Run by Father Simon Lumbela at the Gorsilaure Children's Village in Qinsantu, Bas-Congo, the project provides education for the children and a hospital with maternity and surgical units, as well as overseeing farming, food production and manufacturing schemes.

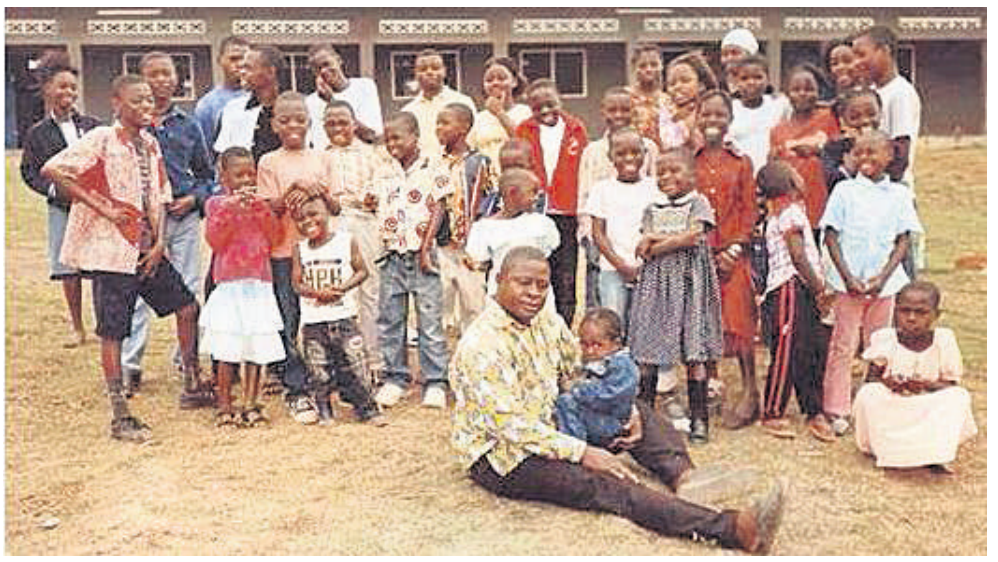
Sister Margaret Rose said: "Father Simon and the residents of the orphanage send their sincerest thanks to every reader of the Champion who has ever reached out to them via the Gorsilaure Project.

"Father Simon wants you to know that, unlike the countless other destitute and abandoned Congolese children, Gorsilaure's orphans are being given the chance to survive and that this is entirely due to the compassion and generosity they receive from the big-hearted people who, on learning about their plight, are moved to offer them some financial aid.

"Father Simon reassures every benefactor that he or she will continue to be held in grateful prayer."

Expressing her own thanks and appealing to supporters to both keep up their efforts and ask others to join in, Sister Margaret Rose added: "The children's very survival depends on the outreach they receive and God knows how to make whatever anyone can contribute go a long way – just as Jesus did when he multiplied the loaves and fishes."

For more details about the project and how to donate, contact Peter Harding on 01383 822540 or 07963 606 677 or by email at peterharding48@aol.co.uk.



Father Simon Lumbela with orphans from the Gorsilaure Project.

County council hosts information evening for potential adopters

LANCASHIRE County Council is holding another information evening for people thinking about starting or growing their family through adoption.

The event will be held on Tuesday, January 16 at County Hall, Fishergate Hill, Preston running from 6 to 7.30pm.

County Councillor Susie Charles

Following a short presentation, members of the county council's adoption team, including social workers, will be available to answer questions, talk people through the process and offer confidential advice.

County Councillor Susie Charles, Lancashire's cabinet member for children, young people and schools, said: "We need people from all backgrounds to offer a permanent home and family to children who are not able to live with their birth family.

"You must be over 21 and live in Lancashire or close by, but whatever your race, gender, sexuality, living arrangements, age or employment status, we want to hear from you.

"What matter to us are your personal qualities and that you are able to provide a loving home where you can support and look after a child throughout their childhood and beyond."

Adoptive parents are needed for children from young babies up to eight years of age, and particularly people willing to keep families together by adopting siblings.

Brothers and sisters are among the children who wait longest to be adopted, as there are not enough people coming forward who are able to give them a safe, permanent and loving family.

Among the 100 Lancashire children currently ready to be adopted, there are 13 two-sibling groups and five three-sibling groups.

Further details about the information evening and adoption in general are available online at www.lancashire.gov.uk/adoption or by calling the adoption team on 0300 123 6723.

There's no need to book for the adoption information evening, free parking is available and there is disabled access.

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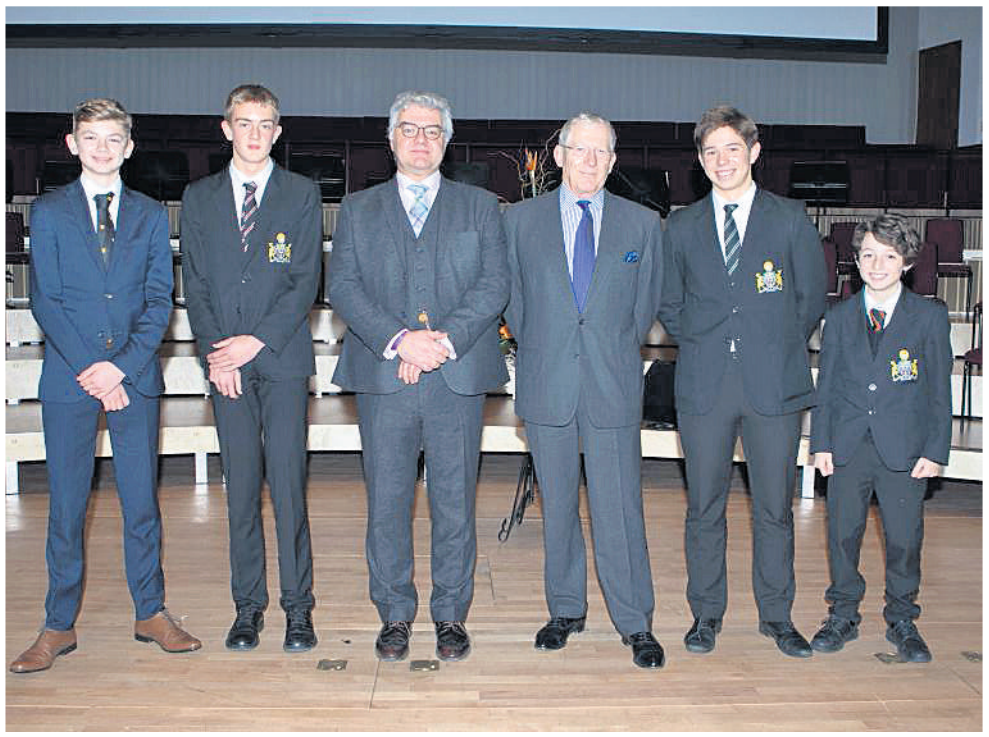

Headmaster Deiniol Williams and guest speaker Nick Hewer (centre right) with prize winning pupils from the Ormskirk area (from left) Harry Greaves, Thomas Cunliffe, Alexander Barker-Weinberger and Charlie Johnson

Guest speakers inspire students at school awards ceremonies

MERCHANT Taylors' Schools, which draw pupils from throughout the area including West Lancashire, have celebrated the outstanding success of students at two prestigious prize-giving ceremonies at the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall.

The Senior Girls' School welcomed as guest speaker, former pupil, Clare Lilley, the director of programme at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, who gave an inspirational speech to the girls, staff and parents in which she encouraged everyone to "embrace responsibility and give to something bigger than yourself."

Meanwhile, former right-hand man to Lord Sugar on BBC's The Apprentice and current host of Countdown, Nick Hewer, was the guest speaker at the Boys' School event.

He entertained the audience with a witty speech about his time at school and varied career in television and told the boys to recognise all the opportunities available to them and always try something new.

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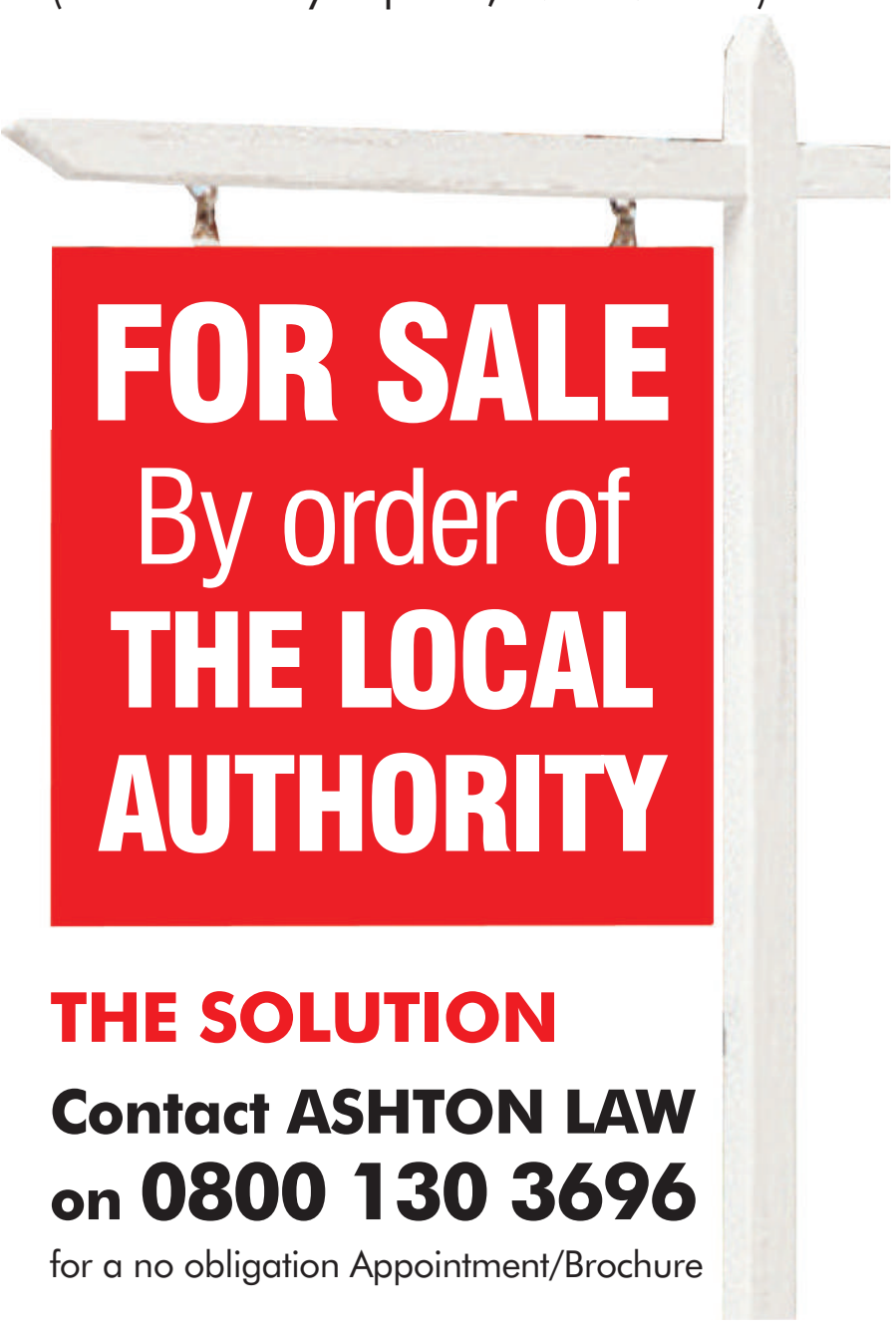

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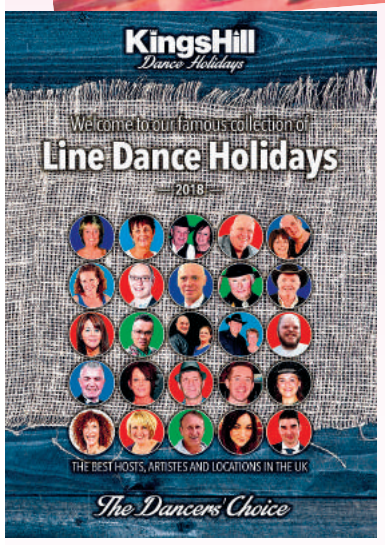

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Clive John as Johnny Cash

Spirit of Man in Black is alive and kicking

THE spirit of the Man in Black is alive and kicking in the Johnny Cash Roadshow which is coming to the Southport theatre on Saturday, January 20.

This show aims to be entertainment from the first note.

It caters for country music lovers and die hard Cash fans alike.

Clive John aims to capture the essence of Cash and performs favourites such as Walk the Line, Folsom Prison Blues and A Thing Called Love.

He also duets on songs including: Don't You Think It's Come Our Time and Jackson.

Martin Bentley is on bass, Nick Davis on guitars, Darren Bazzoni on drums and backing vocals are provided by Louise Masters and Amanda Stone, who add sparkle and glamour as the Carter sisters.

A spokesman for the Johnny Cash Roadshow commented: "Despite the band's professional portfolio and slick stage presence they reach a direct intimacy with audiences of all ages that other performers can't quite pull off. This is more than just a show, it's a heart warming story played out with genuine passion and a wonderful celebration of one of the world's greatest known artists."

Michael Bolton to perform at city venue

Michael Bolton

MICHAEL Bolton, a multiple Grammy Award-winning singer, songwriter and social activist, who has sold more than 65 million records, is coming to the Liverpool Empire on Monday, February 12.

Bolton remains committed to humanitarian causes, especially through the Michael Bolton Charities, now in its 24th year.

In recognition of his artistic achievements, Michael won two Grammys for Best Pop Male Vocal Performance (nominated four times), six American Music Awards, and a Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

As a songwriter, he has earned over 24 BMI & ASCAP Awards, including Songwriter of the Year, nine Million-Air awards, and the Hitmakers Award from the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

To date, Michael has seen eight studio albums rank in the Top Ten, with nine #1 singles. He is preparing to release his 27th album, Songs of Cinema, a tribute to beloved songs from the world's most iconic films.

Bolton has written with some of the greatest and most diverse talent of the time, including Bob Dylan, Paul Stanley, Lady Gaga, Diane Warren, and David Foster.

Bolton's songs have been recorded by the likes of KISS, Kanye West, Jay Z, Barbra Streisand, Cher, and Marc Anthony. Continuing to tour the world each year, Michael has performed with legacies such as Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo, Jose Carreras, Renee Fleming and BB King.

Michael's songs and performances have been featured in numerous television and film soundtracks, including the Oscar-nominated theme song Go the Distance from Walt Disney's blockbuster animated film Hercules and the recent Russell Crowe film Fathers & Daughters.

New Take That musical aiming to shine at Empire

Jayne McKenna, Emily Joyce, Rachel Lumberg, and Alison Fitzjohn. Picture by Matt Crockett

TAKE That's UK tour of Tim Firth's new musical, The Band, with the music of Take That comes to the Liverpool Empire from January 23 to February 3.

Joining the previously announced AJ Bentley, Nick Carsberg, Curtis T Johns, Yazdan Qafouri and Sario Solomon, collectively known as 5 to 5, winners of BBC's Let It Shine, who will play The Band, Rachel Lumberg as Rachel and Faye Christall as Young Rachel, will be Emily Joyce as Heather, Alison Fitzjohn as Claire, Jayne McKenna as Zoe, Katy Clayton as Young Heather, Sarah Kate Howarth as Young Claire, Lauren Jacobs as Young Zoe, Rachel le Diedericks as Debbie, Martin Miller as Jeff and Andy Williams as Dave.

AJ Bentley studied dance before taking part in Let It Shine. Nick Carsberg was a classic car restorer before taking part in Let It Shine. Curtis T Johns has been a songwriter for the last eight years, writing for artists such as Matt Cardle and Ray Quinn.

He also owns and runs a rugby club in his home city of Leeds. Yazdan Qafouri is originally from Iran, but was raised in the North East of England. Sario Solomon made his professional debut at the age of 11 in Oliver! at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane.

Rachel Lumberg's most recent tours include This Is My Family, The Full Monty, Dandy Dick and Calendar Girls. Faye Christall's theatre credits include Broken Biscuits (Paines Plough), Gone Viral (St James Theatre) and One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (Edinburgh Fringe Festival), and she is part of the Cirque Du Soleil Company.

Emily Joyce's television credits include series regulars Jill in My Almost Famous Family, Sarah Fletcher in Mutual Friends and Janet Dawkins in My Hero. Her most recent theatre includes Judy in the West End production of The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time.

Alison Fitzjohn has just finished as assistant director and performer in David Walliams's tour of Gangsta Granny.

She also played The Queen of Hearts/Duchess in the Olivier-nominated immersive production of Alice's Adventures Underground by Les Enfants Terribles. Over the past 12 years, Alison has performed all over the world in Horrible Histories, Barmy Britain and Horrible Science. Jayne McKenna's recent theatre credits include Rose Naracott in War Horse in the West End, Sylvia in This Happy Breed for the Peter Hall Company, Lily Gibb in Men Should Weep at the National and Lady Macbeth in Macbeth at the Northcott Theatre. She also appeared in the film version of the National Theatre's production of London Road as Imelda.

Katy Clayton made her first TV appearance at the age of six on Coronation Street. She appeared in various TV shows such as Casualty, Shameless and Waterloo Road and played series regular Samantha Booth in Where the Heart Is for four years.

The Band is a new musical about what it's like to grow up with a boyband. For five 16 year-old friends in 1992, 'the band' is everything. 25 years on, we are reunited with the group of friends, now 40-something women, as they try once more to fulfil their dream of meeting their heroes.

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

Slimming World Groups Move Venue

Due to the Slimming World brand becoming so popular and the service offered to their members as important as ever three local groups have moved venues recently.
Kathy Burslem who has ran the Burscough Slimming World group for over 11 years says "With our generous and flexible eating plan and the invaluable help and encouragement of our group in 2017 has been our most successful year to date in Burscough helping a record breaking amount of members every single week. And with their commitment to coming to group a staggering 560stone was lost last year."
Paula Skalycz who has recently re launched the Old Skelmersdale groups says "I'm feeling so excited about welcoming all our members - new and existing, to our lovely new venue. We've celebrated some amazing achievments in the Old Skelmersdale groups including our fabulous Sarah Southern who's dropped 4 dress sizes and lost 5st in just 12 months and I literally can not wait to share that success with other slimmers who want to lose weight in the easiest way ever".
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FRAMED PAINTINGS Various, large and small oils; water colours; prints, various prices. All in very good condition. Email pictures available, buyer collects. 0151 2860268

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

KILLEEN KEN

Anne and family would like to thank relatives and friends for their love and support during their recent sad loss. Special thanks to family Doctors, District Nurses and Carers who looked after Ken during his last few months of illness.
Thank you to John Milton for a lovely service at West Lancs Crematorium and MLS Independent Funeral Directors for their caring and professional services.

HUGHES LEN

The family of the late Len Hughes would like to express their heartfelt thanks to all relatives, friends and neighbours, for all their messages of condolence, sympathy cards and donations for St. Michaels Church, received during their recent sad loss.
Thanks also to Rev. Andrew Housley for his kind words of comfort and Lisa Hunter MLS Funeral Directors for their dignified Funeral arrangements.

BRIAN PUNSHON

The family of the late Brian Punshon would like to thank all who sent cards of

Sympathy & support after their loss & for the kind donations to Help For Heroes

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NELSON C.J (JIM)

Jean, Alastair, Richard and Jo would like to thank all who have supported them during the sad loss of Jim; the Ambulance Service, the staff at Southport Hospital, Melanie for the funeral arrangements, Eleanor for her moving service and all those who attended church to celebrate the life of a greatly loved and respected man.
We are very grateful for all the donations for St Paul's Church and The Stroke Association.
Thank you all for your love and sympathy.

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Call the sales team now on 01704 392392

PRAYERS

DEAR SACRED HEART OF JESUS

In the past I have asked for many favours.
This time I ask for one special favour.
(mention it)

Take it dear heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your Father sees it. Then, in his merciful eyes, it will become your favour, not mine.

Amen.

Say this prayer for three days, promise publication and your favour will be granted.
Never to be failed.

B.D.

DEATHS

GREGORY PATRICIA

A service to celebrate the life of Patricia Gregory who died aged 100 years on 31st December 2017 has taken place at Christ Church, Aughton on the 10th January.

Patricia is now reunited with her beloved Husband Cyril. She was a loving and dearly loved Mum of Nigel and Peter and a much loved Granny and Great Granny. Special thanks to management and staff at High Wray Rest Home for their wonderful care and attention. Donations to Cancer Research or Arthritis Trust in Pat's memory would be appreciated c/o Hunters of Ormskirk, 128b Burscough Street, Ormskirk L39 2EY. Tel 01695 572997.

GAGEN (NEE MOORE) ANN

Died 27th December 2017
Aged 80

For my beloved Wife of 58 years, we will meet again, your loving Husband Eric xxx
Missed by all your Children, Grandchildren, and Great Grandchildren xxx
Any enquires call H Hardman & Co Funeral Directors 01695 722122

UNSWORTH KATHLEEN (PEGGY)

3rd January 2018
Aged 98 years

Devoted Wife of the late Joseph. Much loved Mum of Joan, Anne and Jillian. Loving Nan to all her Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren. Peggy will be greatly missed by all her family and friends. Service at St Philip & St Paul with Wesley Parish Church on Monday 15th January at 1:30pm followed by committal at Southport Crematorium. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations are being gratefully received for Carla Lane Animals in Need. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

DEATHS

LLOYD VERA EMILY

On 3rd January 2018
Peacefully in a Care Home after a short illness
Aged 97 years

Beloved Wife of the late Harry, loving Mum of Viv and Nigel, dear Mother in law of Bill and Lynda, much loved Gramdma of Sarah, Helen, Daniel, Anna, Jason and Charlotte and Great Grandma of Becky and Lizzie, Thea and Toby. The family would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at Dovecote Manor Care Home for their every care and attention. Funeral service and committal will take place at West Lancashire Crematorium on Tuesday 16th January at 12.15pm. Family flowers only by request donations if so desired for the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund. Donations and further enquiries please to M Rushton Funeral Directors 100 Marshside Road Southport PR9 9TG. Tel 01704 214118.

BIBBY ANTHONY ALFRED (Tony)

14th December 2017
Aged 81

Tony will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Funeral service to take place at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin Street, Burscough on Wednesday 10th January at 12:15. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Diabetes UK. Further enquiries to Newland and Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors, 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton. PR4 6RJ. 01704 811165.

DAY BRIAN

On 29th December 2017
Peacefully at home
Aged 79 years

Loving Dad of Karen, Tony, Brian, Christopher and Andrew, cherished Grandad and Great Grandad of all his Grandchildren. Will be sadly missed by all his family and friends. Funeral Service will take place at St Michaels Church Dalton on Wednesday 17th January at 11.30am followed by Interment at Ford Cemetery. All Enquiries Margaret Whitelam, Skelmersdale Funeral Service, 29/31 Sandy Lane Tel: 01695 559868.

DEATHS

SHEPHERD LILY

On 1st January 2018
Peacefully in hospital surrounded by all her loving family
Aged 85 years

Loving Mum of Julie, Helen and Brian, cherished Grandma and Great Grandma of all her Grandchildren, will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at St Mary Queen of Apostles Church on Thursday 18th January at 10.15am, followed by commital at West Lancashire Crematorium. Family flowers only please by request. Donations if desired for the R.N.I.B. All enquiries Margaret Whitelam, Skelmersdale Funeral Service, 29/31 Sandy Lane. Tel: 01695 559868.

HARVEY CARL JOHN

23rd December 2017
Suddenly at his home in Westhead
Aged 54 years.

Dearly loved Husband of Kaye, devoted Dad of Ellis and Jared, Father in law of Jack, loving Son of Sandra and Brother to Neil, Ross and Alexandra. Funeral service at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough on Monday 15th January 2018 at 1.00pm. Family flowers only please, donations if desired for The British Heart Foundation. All enquiries to Melanie Hardman at H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk & Scarisbrick. Tel: 01695 722122 / 720012.

BARLOW BILL

January 4 2018
Aged 81 years

Reunited with his beloved Wife Maureen. Dearly loved Dad of Sue and Helen. Much loved Grandad of James, Alex, James, Maddie, Iris and Eva. (Loved and missed forever) Service and cremation at West Lancashire Crematorium on Monday 15th January at 3.15pm. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations to Haematology Dept Southport Hospital would be appreciated. All enquiries to Hunters of Ormskirk, 128b Burscough Street, Ormskirk L39 2EY. Tel: 01695 572997.

DEATHS

LIGGINS DOROTHY

Passed away peacefully on 4th January 2018, aged 90 years of Southport

Dearly loved Wife of the late Alf. Greatly missed by all her friends. Funeral Service at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough on Wednesday 17th January at 1.45pm. Donations if so desired for North West Cancer Southport Branch. Donations and further enquiries please to Lisa Hunter, MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 22a Liverpool Road North, Burscough L40 5TP. Tel 01704 891555.

GARVEY JOSEPH

2nd January 2018
Aged 80 years

Beloved Dad to Brian, Joanne and Mark.
Dearly missed by all his family.
Funeral service at West Lancs Crematorium on Monday 15th January 11.30am.
Enquiries to Devonport Funeral Services 01695 731199.

COOKSON JOYCE (NEE HOULDCROFT)

5th January 2018
Aged 91 years

Died peacefully in hospital. Loving Wife of the late Bay. Much loved Mum of John, Gill and Paul, Granny of Tom, Will and Jenn. Service at Southport Crematorium on Thursday 18th January at 10:40am. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations are being gratefully received for Peacehaven House Care Home. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

DEATHS

SHIERS IRIS LILIAN

Passed away peacefully at Croston Park Nursing Home

Iris will be missed by all who knew her.
Funeral Service to take place at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough on Friday 12th January 2018 at 1pm.
Further enquiries to Newland & Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors, 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton, PR4 6RJ. Tel: 01772 811165

SLINN ELIZABETH

Of Hesketh Bank
Died suddenly at home on 22nd December 2017

Funeral Service to take place at All Saints Church, Hesketh Bank on Thursday 11th January at 11am. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Queenscourt Hospice. Further enquiries to Newland & Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors. 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton. 01772 811165.

MOORE ERIC

5th January 2018
Passed away peacefully at home
Aged 75 years of Aughton

Dearly loved Husband of Beverley. Much loved Dad of Vicky & James and a loving Grandad of Olivia. Loved and missed by all family and friends. Funeral Service at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough on Tuesday 16th January at 2.30pm. All donations to Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital. Further enquiries please to Lisa Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 20 Moss Delph Lane, Aughton L39 5DZ. Tel: 01695 424888.

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DEATHS

GORE ANDREW

24th December 2017
Passed away at Royal Blackburn Hospital
Aged 64 Years

Andrew will be sadly missed by family and friends and the many people who knew him. Funeral Service to take place on Friday 12th January 2018, 2pm at Holy Trinity Church, Church Road, Tarleton, Lancashire, PR4 6UP, followed by interment at St Mary's Churchyard, Liverpool Road, Tarleton, PR4 6HJ. For people travelling to Tarleton, please feel free to park in the farmyard, Banks Farm, Liverpool Road, PR4 6HP where transport will be provided to and from church. The family would like to invite all who attend the funeral for refreshments at Hurlston Hall Golf Club, Hurlston Lane, Scarisbrick, Ormskirk, L40 8HB. Family flowers only please, donations are being gratefully received for The Magic Fund.

Further enquiries to Newland and Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors, 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton, Lancashire, PR4 6RJ. Tel 01772 811165

DEATHS

LIVESLEY STANLEY JOSEPH (STAN)

Passed away peacefully at home on 31st December 2017
Aged 83 years of Halsall

Dearly loved Husband of Joan, Father of Judith and Barbara, Grandfather of Thomas, Rupert and Alexander. Funeral Service at Christ Church, Aughton on Wednesday 10th January 2018 at 10.30am, followed by private cremation at West Lancs Crematorium. Family flowers only please by request, but donations if so desired for Queenscourt Hospice. Donations and further enquiries please to Lisa Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 20 Moss Delph Lane, Aughton. Tel: 01695 424888

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DEATHS

DUNN WILLIAM MICHAEL

December 27, 2017
Peacefully, aged 90 years

Loving Husband of the late Mavis and loving Dad of Michael, David and twins Barrie and Jane. Proud Grandpa of Liam, Kate and James. Great Grandpa of Alfie. Will be sadly missed by all family and friends. Requiem Mass at The Church of St John the Evangelist, Burscough on Wednesday 10th January 2018 at 11am followed by interment in the churchyard. Family flowers only please. Further enquiries please to Cookson Tyrer Funeral Directors, 2 Smithy Walk, Burscough, Lancashire L40 5UU Tel 01704 897770.

GAGEN ANN

Died 27th December 2017
Peacefully in her sleep aged 80

Missing you Mum, love Shirley, Ian and family xxx

BIRTHDAY MEMORIAMS

KILLEEN BERYL

Birthday memories
9th January

In our hearts and thoughts forever. Sadly missed and always loved. From Ronnie, Andrew, Sandra, Jamie, Ryan and Savannah xxx

LONG CYNTHIA HELEN

11th January

A birthday message for our beautiful Mum, Just to say that you are missed more and more each day. From your loving children Denise, Andrew and Jayne xxx

LONG CYNTHIA HELEN

11th January

Just a birthday message, fond and to say, that not a day goes by without precious thoughts of you. From your loving Husband Maurice xxx

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Department for Transport

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

The Secretary of State gives notice of the proposal to make an Order under section 247 of the above Act to authorise the stopping up of an irregular shaped south eastern part width of Beechtrees to the rear of no. 249 Blakehall at Skelmersdale, in the Borough of West Lancashire.

If made, the Order would authorise the stopping up only to enable development to be carried out should planning permission be granted by West Lancashire Borough Council. The Secretary of State gives notice of the draft Order under Section 253 (1) of the 1990 Act.

Copies of the draft Order and relevant plan will be available for inspection during normal opening hours at West Lancashire Borough Council, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 2DF in the 28 days commencing on 10 January 2018, and may be obtained, free of charge, from the address stated below quoting NATTRAN/NW/S247/3124.

Any person may object to the making of the proposed order by stating their reasons in writing to the Secretary of State at nationalcasework@dft.gsi.gov.uk or National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR, quoting the above reference. Objections should be received by midnight on **07 February 2018**. You are advised that your personal data and correspondence will be passed to the applicant/agent to enable your objection to be considered. If you do not wish your personal data to be forwarded, please state your reasons when submitting your objection.

G Patrick, Casework Manager

West Lancashire Borough Council

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Article 15

APPLICATION(S) FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Application No: 2017/1343/FUL Removal of Condition No. 1 (agricultural occupancy condition) imposed on planning permission 8/6/1122 at Riversdale, Marsh Road, Hesketh Bank.
This does not (or may not) accord with the development plan.

APPLICATION(S) AFFECTING A CONSERVATION AREA / LISTED BUILDING

Application No: 2017/1257/FUL Conversion of ancillary garage to beauty studio with A1 use at Briars Hall Hotel, 156 Briars Lane, Lathom.
Application No: 2017/1261/FUL Replacement of an aluminium framed patio door unit. Modification to the existing garden room, replacing hardwood framed door with a hardwood framed window. Decking laid in front of the french door at Brynkerry, Back Lane, Newburgh.
Application No: 2017/1290/COU Change of use of 2 rooms on the 1st floor from offices to domestic use at 27A Church Street, Ormskirk.
The applications are available for viewing on the Council's website www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning. Alternatively, the application can be viewed during normal office hours at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk and at 1st Floor, The Concourse, Skelmersdale. If you wish to comment on the proposal you can do so via the Council's web site, by e.mail to plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk or in writing to Development and Regeneration Services, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, but these must be received within 21 days of the date of this notice quoting the application no. Any comments made will be available for public inspection.
Applications for Minor Commercial and Householder Development
In the event that an appeal is made against a decision of the Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the proposed development, and that appeal then proceeds by way of the expedited procedure under the written representations procedure, any representations made to the Council about an application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.

John R Harrison DipEnvP., MRTPI Director of Development and Regeneration — Dated: 10th January 2018 PDNOT980

West Lancashire Borough Council Village Shop Rate Relief Scheme [Local Government and Rating Act 1997]

Under the provisions of the above Act the Council has produced an updated draft Rural Settlement List (the List) which identifies any rural settlement which is wholly or partly within the designated rural area (as specified by the Secretary of State).

The List is available for public inspection, free of charge at the Offices of West Lancashire Borough Council, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk until, **31/03/2019 on Mondays to Thursdays from 9.00am to 5.00pm, Fridays from 9.00am to 4.45pm. The List will take effect from 1/4/2018**

Any qualifying Post Office, General Store, Food Store, Public House or Petrol Filling Station situated within a rural settlement as identified on the List, may be entitled to either Mandatory or Discretionary rate relief under this scheme. For application forms for rate relief, general information and advice please contact the Business Rates Team at the offices of West Lancashire Borough Council.
Dated: 10th January 2018

Kim Webber B.Sc., M.Sc.,
Chief Executive
West Lancashire Borough Council
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www.westlancs.gov.uk

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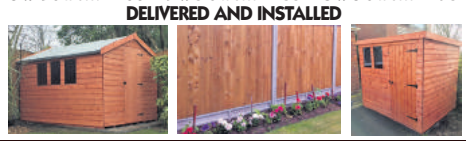

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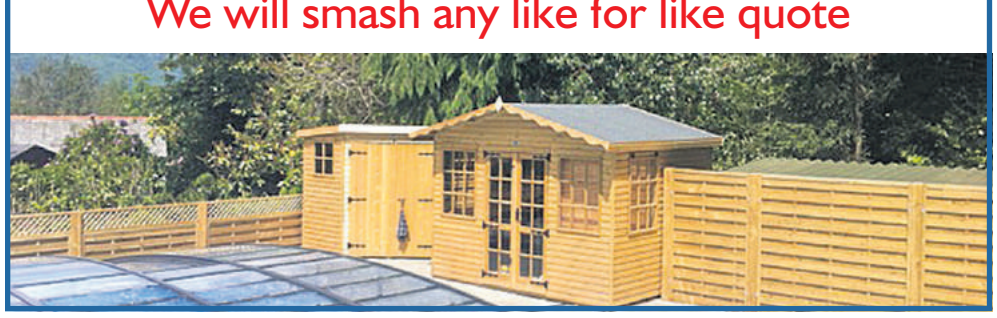

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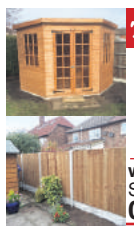

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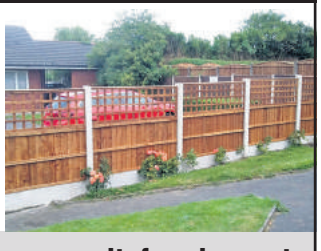

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WANT TO KNOW WHAT OUR READERS THINK?
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It's hard to become a pro

Life On Cars
DAVID SIMISTER
www.lifeoncars.co.uk

UNLESS you were fed oversteer with your alphabetti spaghetti from an early age it's very hard to make it as a professional racing driver.

There are exceptions to the rule but generally to make the grade in top flight motor sport you need to have a sizeable amount of raw talent, a proven track record of working your way up through increasingly scary single-seaters, total fearlessness about losing it on a slippery right-hander and a considerable amount of cash – and even then you might get a politely worded letter of rejection from Sauber.

But it's going to be even harder with the latest racing series that's being launched, because it's so tech-savvy that it dispenses with those pesky human drivers entirely. I suppose Roborace was inevitable in an age where you can do your shopping by drone and Donald Trump is forever contemplating ordering a nuclear launch from one of his golf courses. It's not even a remote control affair; all the racing will be done on engineers' laptops beforehand, programming the cars to strut their stuff autonomously.

The tech itself is a smart move. Back in the 1950s Jaguar made a big deal about its Le Mans-proven disc brakes filtering down to its XK150s and Mk2s and it's the same story here; if the future of driving really is autonomous, then surely having it honed in the white heat of motor sport is a good idea? I know the Government's very keen on self-driving cars, but there are still all sorts of logistical headaches to clear up, and sorting it on a race track is safer (and more fun) than doing it on the M57.

But what I'd like to see isn't a load of autonomous cars racing each other; it's man versus machine, which is surely what all motor sport is about in the first place. Who wants to see a load of glorified laptops dancing around one another when they can watch one robo-racer set a time around a circuit or up a hillclimb, and then see if any of their human-operated counterparts can beat it?

I bet most kids in a Honda Type-R reckon they could kick a robot's arse at a track day – and in doing so, they'll be helping to improve the future of driving for the rest of us.

Bring it on.

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Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the All-New Ford Fiesta range: urban 40.9-80.7 (6.9-3.5), extra urban 67.3-94.2 (4.2-3.0), combined 54.3-88.3 (5.2-3.2). Official CO_2 emissions 118-82g/km.
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57 BMW X3 3.0 DIESEL SPORT AUTO, silver grey, full leather trim, PAS, E/W, r/locking, A/C, ABS, s/history.....**£5,995**

61 NISSAN QASHQAI NTEC 1.6 6SPD, white, alloys, sat nav, PAS, E/W, C/L, 61,000 miles, pan roof.....**£8,495**

12 VW PASSAT SE 2.0 TDI, 6spd, met blue, PAS, E/W, C/L, A/C, alloys, 86,000 miles.....**£6,895**

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64 PEUGEOT 5008 ACTIVE 2.0 AUTO, 7 seater, PAS, E/W, C/L, A/C, CD, alloys, 30,000 miles.....**£9,995**

13 PEUGEOT 5008 AUTO 2.0 HDI, 5 seater, met blue, PAS, E/W, C/L, A/C, ABS, 76,000 miles.....**£6,395**

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60 PEUGEOT 207 MILLESIM 1.4, 5SPD 3DR, black, PAS, E/W, C/L, A/C, ABS, alloys, 52,000 miles.....**£3,295**

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55 RENAULT CLIO 1.2 3DR, 5spd, PAS, E/W, C/L, alloys, A/C, ABS,CD.....**£1,295**

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56 SAAB 9-3 VECTOR 1.9 TDI, met blue, half leather, PAS, E/W, C/L, A/C, alloys, service history.....**£1,795**

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56 CHEVROLET TACUMA SX MPV, 1600CC, 5SPD, met blue, PAS, E/W, C/L, ABS, 76,000 miles.....**£1,295**

53 ROVER 75 CLASSIC SE, 1800CC, 5SPD PETROL, met gold, PAS, E/W, C/L, ABS, A/C, 64,000 miles.....**£1,295**

52 VAUXHALL OMEGA CDX AUTO 2.6, leather, E/roof, 65,000 miles..**£1,195**

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Cash Price	£15,079.68	Optional Final Payment	£5,961.00
Customer Deposit	£199.00	Interest Charges	£1,633.32
Deposit Allowance	£500.00	Annual Mileage	5,000
Minimum Part Ex	£500.00	Total Amount Payable	£16,713.00
Amount of Credit	£13,680.68	**APR Representative**	4.2%
47 Monthly Payments	£199.00		

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Deposit Allowance	£3,000.00	Annual Mileage	5,000
Minimum Part Ex	£500.00	Total Amount Payable	£21,188.06
Amount of Credit	£15,607.58	**APR Representative**	4.2%
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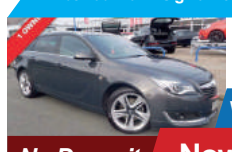

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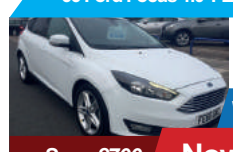

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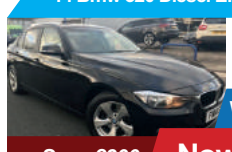

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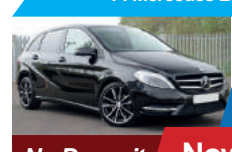

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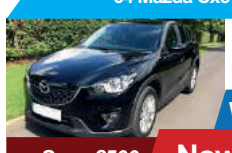

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Skem hopeful of returning to winning ways

THERE is every reason why Skelmersdale United supporters will be optimistic about their club's chances of picking up some points over the next few weeks.

A run over four consecutive defeats was ended by Jordan Darr's last gasp goal at Ramsbottom last Saturday, but the main reason is that all Skelmersdale's next three league games are against teams they have already beaten this season, starting with the visit of Tadcaster Albion at Volair Park, Prescot this Saturday.

While Skem are at home, Burscough take to the roads with a trip to Irlam for a North-West Counties League Premier Division encounter.

However, instead of trying to emulate a previous result, the Linnets will be trying to do anything but, as they went down 4-1 at home to the West Manchester based club.

Burscough are now 15th in the league table and Irlam are 21st, so Dave Sutton's team have every reason to be positive.

For the statistical enthusiast, Skelmersdale won 2-1 at Tadcaster on a wet windy day back in October, Andy Owens and Alastair Redmayne getting the goals.

Skelmersdale's following two games are at Mossley next Saturday and away to Ossett Town on Tuesday, January 23.

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Darr celebrates after scoring a late equaliser. Picture by John Driscoll

Dream debut for Darr who scores last gasp equaliser

Ramsbottom United 1
Skelmersdale United 1

JORDAN Darr scored a last gasp equaliser on his debut to rescue a point for Skelmersdale, *writes Neil Leatherbarrow.*

Darr, a young loanee from Chorley, wasted no time in making his mark with Skem supporters after coming on in the 71st minute before scoring deep into added time.

Skelmersdale came closest to scoring in the first 20 minutes, Tom Molyneux breaking from midfield and thumping a shot in from 25 yards that home goalkeeper Charlie Albinson only dealt with at the second attempt.

In the 24th minute a surging run by home right-back Sam Heathcote resulted in a pass through to Gaskell who contrived to side-foot the ball wide with the goal almost at his mercy.

With seconds remaining before the half time whistle, Wright beat the Skem offside trap down the left. He pulled the ball back across the box and Gaskell flicked the ball past Roberts to make it 1-0 from about 15 yards.

After the restart Skelmersdale started to force Ramsbottom back more and although Skem weren't creating much, significantly Ramsbottom weren't creating much either.

Hence the first-quarter hour of the half wasn't very thrilling at all.

On the hour Wright made an enterprising run from the right before unleashing a left-foot shot that went just past Roberts left-hand post.

Perhaps significantly, on 69 minutes home goalkeeper Albinson went for a bouncing ball with Alastair Redmayne and was then seen to be holding his hand.

He then punched away a corner and was clearly in pain. After a lengthy bit of treatment Albinson left the pitch to be replaced in goal by midfielder Dean Stott. Ramsbottom went more defensive to protect Stott while Skelmersdale continued to push forward.

Skelmersdale might have scored when Harry Blackburn found himself behind the home defence on 86 minutes but Stott dashed out to block his effort.

In the 93rd minute Skelmersdale won a corner on the right that was only partially cleared. Mike Roddy lobbed the ball back into goalmouth, Tom Mitchell headed it down and the ball went across the face of the goal to Darr who slammed it home from about three yards.

It had been a poor quality game but the conditions were probably a big factor in that.

After the match, Dave Powell said: "It wasn't the best spectacle for the fans on a difficult pitch, but I am absolutely delighted the way the lads have responded from last week. Overall the lads deserved something from that game and hopefully we can kick on from here."

Sutton laments luckless Linnets after narrow loss

Burscough 0
Widnes 1

BURSCOUGH manager Dave Sutton rued his side's bad luck after they narrowly lost out to the league's in-form side, *writes Neil Leatherbarrow.*

Widnes' victory meant that they have now won a remarkable ten successive league games.

It was a close tight encounter at Victoria Park that given a bit of luck might easily have resulted in a Burscough victory and put an end to the visitor's envious record. Burscough were forced into one change before the game had even started, in-form left-sided player Matt Ward suffering an injury during the warm-up, though the Linnets were boosted by the return to the team of left-back Jamie Clark after injury.

The first-half saw defences on top with both teams limited to few clear cut opportunities in front of goal.

Burscough did start well, Peter Henerty putting one over the crossbar and having another saved by former Linnets goalkeeper Richie Mottram. Widnes got the only goal of the game moments before the half-time whistle. Co-manager and former Skelmersdale United striker Kevin Towey tormenting the Burscough defence on the 18 yard line, eventually he laid the ball off to striker Brad Smart, who twisted away from his marker before putting the crucial goal into the Burscough net.

In such a close game the Widnes goal made a big difference, it didn't just give them the lead, it allowed them to sit back and hold on rather than push forward and leave gaps for Burscough to exploit.

After the interval chances became even fewer than in the first-period. Chad Whyte having the best opening for Burscough with a header, but Mottram dealt with it.

After the game Dave Sutton said: "We have to have a bit more confidence in front of goal.

"We had more of the possession for long periods of the game and it is frustrating that we didn't get anything at the end, I thought we deserved at least a point."

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